

ENGLAND'S
Imminent Danger ,
AND
ONLY REMEDY
Faithfully Considered and
Represented

By an Impartial Hand.

*The Lyon hath roared, who will not
fear? The Lord hath spoken, who
can but Propheſie? Amos 3. 8.*

LONDON,
Printed for Thomas Dring at the Sign of the
White Lyon next Chancery Lane in
Fleet-street. 1671.



Reader



He very reading prophane books is an unhappiness, but a second perusal, guilt and Approbation: The number of good ones should not discourage, but provoke our writing; He that puts out such, spreadeth nets of Salvation, and adorne the world with none of the worst Furniture. But, time goeth, we turn over leaves, and find ourselves no less ignorant, no more advantaged: reading many books hinders the digestion of one, a due search into the only excellent, and other duties absolutely necessary: which occasion'd the composers reducing these memorials into so narrow a compass, as may be review'd in fewer houres than was layd out in gleaning them, that more may be spent

To the Reader.

in doing, and less in knowing what is required in such a day as this. Eternity pulls us by the sleeve, bids us look at the gliding of every sand in the hour-glass of our lives, upbraids us with mis-spending the former part in vain, fruitless studies, and calls on us to redeem them by some labours for the good of our selves and others: Thus we wrest the sith out of the hand of death, and pull the wings from his heels. The publick weal not only warrants but exacts the most universal importunate endeavours, suffers none to live in the world, only to fill up the number and tale of it. If the Church of God lie in distress (saith a reverend Bishop) and we stretch our selves on beds of Ivory; If she mourn in sackcloth, and we riot in soft raiment; If the wild Boar in the Forrest break in upon her, and we send not our prayers to drive him away; If there be cleanness of teeth in the poor, and our teeth grind them

To the Reader

“ them still ; If their bowels be empty of
“ food, and ours still empty of compas-
“ sion ; If the wrath of God be inflamed
“ against his people, and our zeal remain
“ still as frozen, our charity as cold, our
“ affections as benumm'd, our compassions
“ as stupified as ever ; If Sion lie in the
“ dust, and we hang not up our harps, nor
“ pray for her peace, we are unnatural
“ members and can expect nothing but the
“ curse of Meroz, who went not Judge. 5. 23
“ out to help the Lord. How needful E-
pitomes are, is sufficiently evident, if we
consider, the shortness of our time, the va-
riety of our duties, the multiplicity of our
affairs, the weakness of our memories, the
numerousness, the voluminousness of
books, and the fastidiousness that is b-
got in us by reading them. He that judges
Epitomes, condemns himself, the Epi-
tome of the world. God having the first
day diffused the light, through the whole
hemisphere, contracted it the fourth, with-

To the Reader.

in the body of the Sun , and the micro-cosm into man. He hath Epitomized all practical Divinity into ten heads; our Saviour those ten into two, and those two into one; and all that we can pray for, or against into six. If (as is supposed) Aristotle stole that which he had from the most excellent of those that went before him, and Virgil drew all his richest inventions from Homer, Hesiod, Theocritus; and Cicero boldly furnished himself with the doctrine of the Stoicks, Academicks Epicures; If Zachariah commit to writing that which Jeremiah had preached, and Obadiah what he had pen'd before; If Saint Mark abbreviate the other Evangelists; and St. Jude, St. Peter, & the New Testament, have many things out of the old, if in our nice inquisitive age much is transcribed out of former ones: If so many have wished for, and others expected a collection from our modern authors, and some

To the Reader.

endeavour'd it ; If the spiders web spun out of her own bowels , be not more esteem'd than the honey-comb gathered from diverse flowers: The Publisher may dread no severe sentence on the ensuing extract for borrowing the materials where he found them fitting, but his unskilfulness in composing it at first to accomodate a private closet, so being designed but for one (and the lighter passages inserted to make it take with those, that serious matters only would beat away) 'tis not expected some of it should please all, nor all of it, any, yet may recompense their pains, who resolve not to trifle away some of their odd hours but of their most retired thoughts and severest meditations in perusing it ; and will be but so honest to themselves and charitable to the scribe, as to take every thing in a sense will most profit them. It despises not Dominions, nor speaks evil of Dignities ; stands for no party but that
where

To the Reader

where none should be neuters, every one engaged. Complaints are more frequent, more easie than redresses: the making it publick calls for many apologies, but its usefulness to those that otherwise might not meet with, or understand what is writ this way, that want money to purchase, or opportunity to read many books, the too great seasonableness and concernment of it, shall stand for all. While so many enjoy the deserved praise of the first invention of things, it shall suffice me (who am not worthy to wash the feet of the meanest of my Lord's servants) if I but be a remembrancer of what hath been formerly met with; without claiming any considerable part of it, or of this epistle as my own but the Errata's (the printers excepted) which also, the equal and prudent reader will be easily able to rectifie or excuse; and find much to benefit, but nothing that may justly offend any, except those for whose use the publishing hereof was

To the Reader.

was never intended. And if it should but move them also to do it better, I shall think for this, if for nothing else, the tacking-together (at houres that might have been otherwise lost, or worse spent, or justly given to sleep (tis an honest injurie to nature to steal from her some hours of repose) what they may not deem worthy to Read) was not to no purpose. So it afford any advantage to an honest mind, or my native Country, I shall cheerfully undergo the scorn of the curious and censorious; aspiring to no more height than the comfort of a good conscience, doing good to some, harm to none. My grief is (with an ingenious authour) that the event will prove
“ *it impertinent, there being not much*
“ *hope, that a private whisper should be*
“ *heard by those, who are deaf not only to*
“ *those who lift up their voice like a trum-*
“ *pet, but to the loudest calls of heaven;*
and have made no other use of the various and signal providences we have been
under

To the Reader.

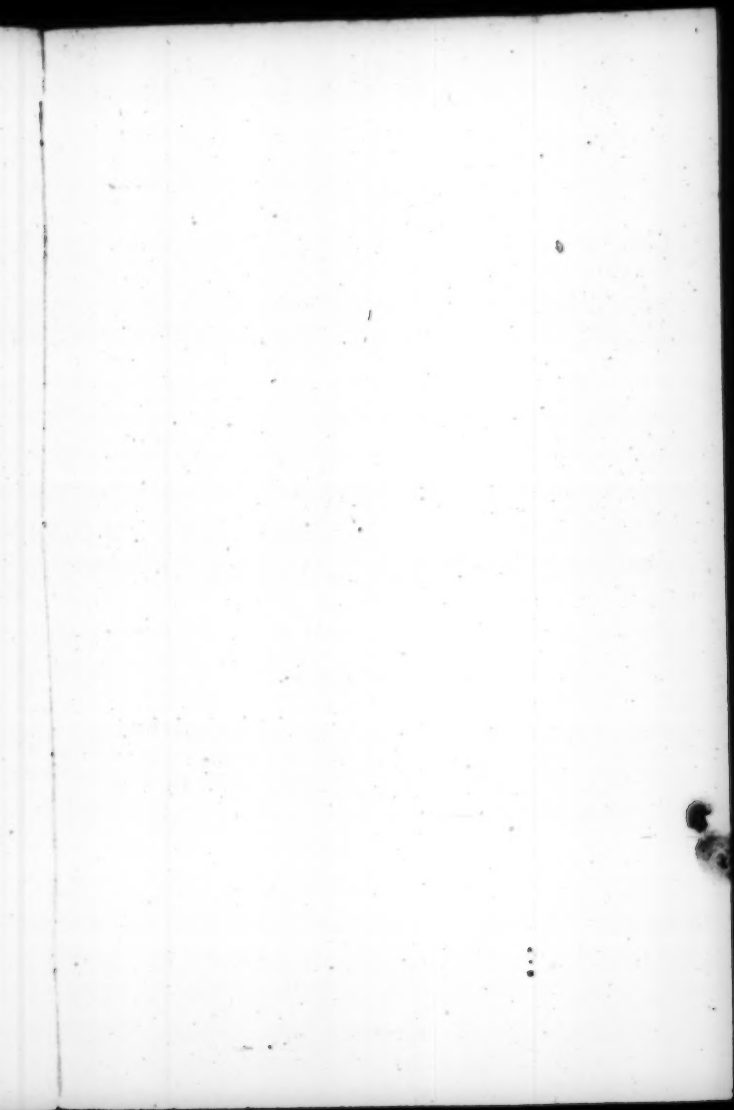
*“ under, then to defeat the design of them.
But it is an hour wherein Religion seems
near a Miscarriage, and it is enough for
me that I have appeared thus far for it,
in a day of necessity. My willingness,
though unable, to contribute any thing
(though never so mean) for rescuing it,
claims your favorable construction of my
paines; That you pass by, small Faults,
and pardon great ones; the consciousness
of my own, makes me remain Incognito.*

The general Heads.

E ngland call'd upon, by the difference between virtue and vice	1
By the creatures	9
By the scriptures	15
By our civil wars	24
By our peaceable settlement	33
By our forraign wars	36
By the dreadful pestilence	39
By the dismal fire of London	43
And in our Harbour	49
By prodigies and poverty	52
By the parable of a vineyard	58
Our unanswerable demeanour under each of them	
<i>Signes of the last judgment and of England's ruine</i>	93
<i>To prevent the last (if the decree be not past)</i>	128
The Nobles, the Magistrates	140
The ministers	156
The masters	159
The prophane	161
<i>Are call'd upon, more especially true Christians</i>	163
To eminency in piety and peaceableness	164
An example of it	184
To regard God's displeasure	197
To spend their main censures upon themselves	205
To purity of heart	209
To an humble dress	213
To temperance and sobriety	216
To a sense of sin and judgment	221
One-ness of heart and endeavour	226
Mourning	

The general Heads.

Mourning and weeping	233
Fasting and <i>prayer</i>	244
<i>Its</i> prevalency	257
The great advantage <i>good men</i> are to a nation	266
How unworthily requited	276
<i>Their private devotion</i> exemplifi'd in Their Solemn humi- liation for the sins of the nation	281
Particularly, <i>those</i> of our Nobles	283
Magistrates, Ministers	284
Hearers	285
Families	286
Lawyers, Tradesmen	287
Professors	288
Unfruitfulness	289
Sabbath-breaking	291
Covetousness	291
Pride, idleness	292
Surfeiting and drunkenness, uncleanness	293
Swearing	294
Prophaness and blasphemies, blood	295
Insensibleness and impenitency under judgments	296
<i>Their earnest pleading with God, by Arguments</i> drawn, from what we have undergone already	298
From our posterity	301
From the multitude and malice of our enemies	302
From former mercies	304
We are his people	306
For the sake of religion	309
From their wonted prevalency	310
From our own weakness	312
From his own bowels, and good pleasure under which also is compris'd the <i>matter of prayer.</i>	316



ERRATA.

P Age. 6, line. 30. Read, *stain of*. p. 21. l. 22. r. decry. p. 26. l. 28. r. futies.
 p. 40. l. 1. r. above. l. 8. r. some streets p. 43. l. 26. r. Accended. p. 45. l. 6. r.
 shame. p. 53. l. 2. r. direful. l. 28. r. vye. p. 56. l. 13. r. Robe. p. 63. l. 18. r. the. p. 76.
 l. 18. r. name. p. 81. l. 13. r. and. p. 82. l. 14. r. it. p. 83. l. 32. r. fat overflow's. p. 105.
 l. 28. r. nice. p. 112. l. 2. r. silly. p. 117. l. 32. r. his. p. 120. l. 4. r. he. p. 143. l. 7. r. wild. p.
 156. l. 22. r. wrangling. p. 158. l. 4. r. ill. p. 166. l. 1. r. avow'd. l. 16. r. were. p. 176. l.
 30. r. worse. p. 184. l. 4. r. times. p. 202. l. 30. r. to bring. p. 204. l. 19. r. upon. p. 210. l.
 17. r. but. p. 213. l. 7. blot out, *be*. p. 214. l. 24. r. only. p. 219. l. 34. r. to be. p. 223. l.
 3. r. enough. l. 9. r. lins. p. 224. l. 22. r. we declare. p. 227. l. 10. r. virtues. p. 234. l. 4. r.
 ingredients. l. 25. r. enemies. p. 240. l. 4. r. chimney. p. 245. l. 24. r. his. p. 246. l. 1. r.
 mutual. p. 250. l. 10. r. strength. p. 253. l. 7. r. pleasure. l. 33. r. awake. p. 254. l. 1. r.
 shriek. l. 13. r. bowels. p. 255. l. 6. r. this. p. 256. l. 31. r. sixscore thousand. p. 258. l.
 23. r. subject. p. 259. l. 13. r. press. p. 263. l. 22. after (i) r. *can no more be exprest,*
then what they have that keep Gods precepts. Ps. 119. 56. p. 264. l. 33. r. and. p. 266.
 l. 27. r. judgment is. l. 30. r. see. p. 267. l. 28. r. and. p. 268. l. 1. r. will. l. 30. r. a
 pernicious creature, and dangerous, a publick evil to the place he lives in. p.
 271. l. 7. r. the lord of hosts. p. 275. l. 8. blot out, *that*. l. 16. r. low. p. 276. l. 13. r. ad-
 ministrations. p. 278. l. 25. r. his. p. 288. l. 14. r. detraction. p. 294. l. 14. r. blessings.
 p. 316. l. 25. r. cry.

Advertisement of a Book.

The devout communicant Exemplified *ſ*n his behavi-
 our before, at and after the Sacrament, large, and
 more practical then any yet extant ſold by *Tho.*
Dring in Fleet-street.



ENGLANDS
Imminent Danger,
And onely
REMEDY.

England called upon.

GOD at sundry times hath called upon us in Divers manners. His Love and Hatred, an Intellectual eye sees impreſt on the native Beauty and loathſome deformity, of *good* and *Evil*. Integrity hath ſuch a fairneſs, luſtre, and magnetick power, as by its own worth allures, and wins upon us, out of meer *love*, to cloſe with ſuch an *Amiable* object.

England called upon, by the difference between Virtue and Vice.

Among the *worſt* is a kind of natural Awe and Reverence towards *Good men*; their *Intrinsic* glory darts ſuch rayes of *outward* Splendor and Magnificence, as makes them rather envied than hated, feared than diſreſpected: None neglect, or deſpiſe a *good name*, but he who either deſpaires of, or reſolves againſt doing

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any thing that may deserve it; therefore would by his obliquities deprive goodness and vertue of all just Honour, and Fame in the world. An *unjust Judge*, if disinterested in the cause, will give a *Righteous judgment*, he loves a *Bribe*, but not injustice. Such who care not to blot their *names* out of the *Book of life*, would fain write *them* in the *Chronicles of fame*; and had rather their very *graves* be buried than their *good works*. The *prophane* affect to be esteemed *Virtuous*, but excuse or lay their *faults* rather on God, Satan, others, their natural Constitution than their own wills; and like Irregular Patients blame their Phylician for those ill accidents they know owing only to their own unruliness.

Sin hath many *Servants* but few *Patrons*; tis in it self so shamefully *disgracefull*, that such as lodge it in their *hearts*, would seem to throw it out of their *doors*, and lay it at any *man's* rather than *their own*; nor ever owne it except under some other *name*; to play the *Devil* they personate a *Saint*, pursue *vengeance* under pretence of *justice*, *murder*, but 'tis for their *oath sake*, (*a*) and that they may kill *Christ*, worship him. (*b*) Satan would have many wares unfaleable, did not his Broker *profit pander*, which puts *Vertues* visage on *Vices* face; casts a *Samuel's mantle*, over the *Devil's* shoulders; Christens *Covetousness* good-husbandry; *Fraud* *Ingenuity*; *Cousenage* *Indultry*; *Rebaptizes* *oppression* *Equity*; and so the *Soul* embraces those *Vices* (which naked would

^a Mat. 7. 4.

^b Mat. 2. 8.

would be skared at) when found cloathed in the Silver vestment of *profit*. God hath stamp't in the cruellest hearts a Reverend respect to his own *Image* in his people, as at first an awe of man in the fiercest creatures ; so as they that *bare*, doe yet honour them. Religion is so excellent, that such who out of passion, or interest condemn, their Reason absolve and give it letters of Recommendation : Their hearts Reverence it, while they lift up their hands to suppress it ; they assist oppressed vertue in its appeal, in the Court of Equity, *Conscience*, where its plea is heard, and righteous sentence reversed ; while the *Criminal* is self accused, when none beside controule, many flatter and commend ; They inwardly assent to the Justice and Authority of these Divine Rules, which their words and actions most oppugn. There is an early and immediate verdict passed in its behalf, in the esteem and liking, creating an Assent and Veneration, not only when obeyed, but from profest despisers, who cannot chuse but think well of that vertue they desert, and the necessity of their affairs compell them to speak ill of. The Judge who gave sentence against our Saviour, at the same moment washed his hands, and openly protest he found no fault in him. Were our eyes open we should see Charms enough in *Virtue*, to procure it self a door without the help of other external Inducements ; A Beauty sparkling within its own bosome, rendering it enamoring without the assistance of those torreign

c 1 Pet. 5.5 sides, that so numerously surround it; and 'tis not only in it self Illustrious, but gilds those that are cloathed with it, (c) with its reflexive beames it shines through the coarsest sackcloth, and Enamels the garments with so much glory, as adorns all that wear them with a remarkable Beauty and Splendor. Did women know how much *Vertue* enhances *Beauty*, they would be *vertuous*, that they might be *beautiful*; and without *corrupting nature* by *paint*, would use no other *Red*, but that of *modesty*; no other *white* but that of *Innocence*; no other *majesty* but that of *prudence*; no other *sweet* but that of *meekness*; no other *pomp*, but that of *humility*; for in this *Cloathing*, they shine with greater lustre, than in all the well wrought spoiles of Silkworms. The very *Heathens* distinguishing between *Imaginary* and *Real Misery*, so preferred *suffering* before *doing Injustice*, that they affirmed *Injustice* the worst kind of *suffering*; and that nothing *hurts* a man so much as the *doing harm*; for when one *Injures* another, the greatest mischief redounds to him who descends to the meanness of doing such things, as deprive him of the privilege of being (a helpfull creature) like unto his *Maker*; and renders him so much worse than the worst of beasts (whose nature and property it is to persecute and devour their fellow creatures) as he hath means allowed him of being better.

Who among them though never so wicked themselves seriously commended another for his rudeness and debaucheries? Or reckoned his

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Lusts among the Titles of his *Honour*? Who ever raised *Trophies* to his *vices*? Or thought to perpetuate his *memory* by the glory of *them*? Who ever suffered in his *Reputation*, by being thought to be *Really good*? Or where was *Sobriety*, *Justice*, *Charity*, thought the marks of *Reproach* and *Infamy*? They accounted it a mans *glory* to be *Virtuous*, and to be *vicious* base and mean; to be betrayed into sin, *weakness*; to contrive it, *fordid*; to defend it, *infamy*; to make a mock at it, a mark of the highest folly and *Incorrigibleness*, and the bare suspicion of *vice* in a person, was diminution to an esteem that might otherwise have been great in the world. We decline *virtue* only because 'tis *difficult*, the companion of all *excellent things*; and without which not worthy a *Recompence*. In the service of impetuous *lusts* is to be undergone far greater *pains*; the *Trouble* of being *sober*, is far less than that of being *debauched* and *intemperate*. The *pleasures of sin* must needs offend through the opposite endeavours of *Flesh & Spirit*, & the bitter remembrance that they must *end*, and yield no more than the *Picture* of *Contentment* to *that* in doing which leads to the right hand of God, where are *pleasures* for ever more.

Vice is the *green sickness* of the Soul, which makes her nauseate all substantial food, and long for nought but *Trash*; she therefore swallows down sensual pleasures with such a delightful *gust* and *Ho-goo*, while all rational

nal Spiritual delights leave their bitter farwell behind; let drop a pious discourse to such, and you make musick unto deaf Adders; do but sling out the Bait of an obscene story, and you angle their *Souls* into their ears: They find more pleasure in a *Lascivious Poem*; than in the *Psalms* of David; the delights of a Jovial Club, more Eligible than those of a Holy Communion; the reason is, their *Appetite* is wofully depraved, the stomach so forfeited with sensuality that it turns against and instantly vomits up all substantial nourishment; but were it purged from the viciousness wherewith 'tis cloyed and over-loaded, she would loath the *Quails*, as much as she doth now the *Manna*; and in the room of her sensual *Bon'ny*, wherewith she's possess'd, would immediately succeed a *Sacred hunger*, making her twine greedily about every precept, watch at every opportunity, suck sweetness out of every duty, extract the very spirits and quintessence of every Ordinance. *Short sighted Souls* look no farther than their senses, grope after *Happiness* in the *Allurements* of the *flsh*, think no *Heaven* to brave *Apparell*, or *Paradise* to that of their mistress's embraces; w^hl buy revenge at so dear a rate as the price of Blood; and the damnation of their Souls with the Hazard of their lives and fortunes; they think the of *flain Blood* is wiped off when their Sword is sheathed; and the noyse of murder still'd so soon as they have struck down their enemy: But he tortures himself that

that sins unpunished ; And did they experience the uninterrupted delights that arise from the *Conscience of well doing*, They'd find good men do not serve God for nought; but that it is worth their while setting aside another life, meerly to prevent a Hell in this ; And that themselves lose the *substance* by catching at the *shadow*; seek for peace in wars and fightings, take much pains to gather Grapes from Thorns, and Figs from Thistles ; such pleasure from vice as only grew from virtue.

Where *Grace* hath not put a restraint on the *Appetite*, stolln waters may be *sweet*, but not *pleasant*: A man is *Happy* or *miserable*, according to his *mind*: *Poverty* with *contentment* is no great affliction ; *Riches* with greedy desires, with continual cares are a plague and torment; the frolicks of voluptuous men that seem to pass away their daies in Mirth and Jollity, are but like the pleasures of a Robber on the Highway, accompanied with fear and constant failing of his heart. We see their great estates, their delicious feasts, their full cups and merry countenances, but not the little Truce they have with misery ; what envy, hatred, from their neighbors ; what inward Recoylings, Trepidations, and convulsions ; what severe sinarts, and Cruel lathings ; what gnawing gripes in secret ; what sad nights after their merry dayes : Their Joyes which make their neighbors envious, are but as the Tormenting Stone, or Gout, stately accomodated, or laid on a Purple bed ; those plagues and torments ,

which we call peace and happineſs. O the melancholly intervalls they muſt needs ſuffer, who are ſain to ſtretch themſelves on Couches, to invent to themſelves Inſtruments of Muſick, to drink Wine in Boles, to ſtudy for new methods of loſing time, that by theſe Amuſements they may put far off the evil day, and be as unmindful of their own, as of the afflictions of *Joſeph*: (d) The morning to them, is as the ſhadow of death, if one know them they are in the terrors of the ſhadow of death: (e) conſcience they dare not permit to ſpeak, leſt it ſhould ſay more than they are willing to hear: It ſuffers the violence of a priſoner, while it ſhould ſuſtain the place of a Judge; yet while dancing round hand in hand, *guilt* like the *Devil* ſtands in the midſt of the *Circle*, and with its flaming eyes often ſtares them into horror, and looks them into trembling. There are a great deal more pleaſures at the *Gate* than can lodge within the Rooms, and Chambers of iniquity: In the cloſeſt retirement they can find to ſin, they are not ſolitary; and in the ſame hour of their ſumptuous ſare, a *Hand writing* ſo troubles their thoughts, that their countenances are changed, the Joints of their loins looſed, their knees ſmite one againſt another (f) and marrs their ſupper without imparing their dainties; changing the ſcene of their delights into that of their pangs, and their full Boles into a cup of trembling: even in laughter their heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth, Heavineſs. Such as applaud themſelves in their privacy to de-

d Am. 6. 1.

&c.

e Job. 24.

17.

f Dan. 5.

by the difference between, &c.

defile their souls, shall be forc'd in the sight of the Sun to do penance before all the world, men, Angels, and Devils, and find confusion, as *sure* as *late*. The sting and shame which accompanies the pleasures of *sin*, the corners which it seeks, the repentance wherewith 'tis followed, together with its little duration, allow it not worthy to be compared with being *innocent* and *virtuous* in the sight of the Sun; debarring from no corporal pleasure that's agreeable to reason, and our true interest, and affording delights incomparably beyond these, which strangers cannot understand, doth not intermeddle with (g).

Disobedient men are *self-condemned*, & at Christ's Bar shall produce Records of their own keeping, writ as with the point of a Diamond, of all their evil deeds from the womb to the grave. They who hate the light to do evil, are scorched with sparks themselves have kindled, but cannot extinguish the Candle of the Lord, (h) nor enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, but are gnawed with that worm which shall never die, where the fire is not quenched; the luscious sweets of sin are so dearly reckoned for, and afford so much bitterness in the latter end, that their senses sadly convince them of (which their sensuality kept them from believing) the folly of gaining any thing at the rate of losing their souls.

*Prov. 24.
10.*

*Prov. 29.
27.*

Considerate men, not content to *inhabit* only, by the but to *understand* (and so truly enjoy) the *creation*, creature. discern a *Divine Omniscient*, shining through the most despicable object. Such a variety

ty of curious useful creatures is *this world* adorned with, as may well astonish an intelligent inquisitive *Spectator*, who traces the *Authors* exquisite inimitable workmanship; yea amaze and force such as see (not the secret recesses or delicate lineaments) but the *surface*, to adore the *God* of nature. Some born *blind*, restored to *sight*, have been so ravished at the surpassing Spectacle of so many curious objects, that almost every thing they saw transported them with such *admiration* and *delight*, as endangered the loss of the *eyes* of their *minds*, by *the* use of their *bodies*. An ability not only to *behold* and *sustain* our lives by them, but to consider, compare, alter, assist, and improve them to various purposes, is a prerogative above other creatures, and so far capable of being advanced by industry, as makes some men excell others as much as they do beasts. The more attentively they reflect upon those things it brings to their knowledge, the more they find the world to be an immense volume, which can be never enough studied, or thoroughly read: and the things of consideration which it offers to their understanding, infinitely exceed in number those that are read in the best furnished libraries. To them the earth seems quite another thing, and in every little particle of its matter (by adding artificial organs to their naturall) see almost as great variety of creatures: and in the parts of the most minute, such gildings, embroideries, and curious variety, as others are able to reckon up in the whole Universe. And how delicate a hand must be employed

ployed to contrive into so narrow a compass, the several external, and internal parts requisite to make up a *little animal*, so small that they are *all workmanship* and not discernible by the unassisted eyes. The numberless kind of birds, beasts, fish, herbs, shrubs, stones, mettals, minerals, and every of which indu'd with all the qualifications requisite to the perpetuation of their species, preservation of their lives, attainment of the respective ends of their creation, the plentiful and easie provition made them; how many *nascuntur Artifices*, born their own crafts-makers, Physician, Carpenter, apparrell'd, and arm'd by nature upon their first entrance; live and sport themselves in their several elements, bring forth young, and provide for them, build, and know their appointed time, every year keep the same course, and order, yet ignorant of what they do, and work for an end they do not understand; (i) in their course fight against the Atheist, who rather ignores the being of God, than denies it; and is little lesse a stranger to the *mysteries of nature*, than to the *Author* of its being writ in such legible Characters upon every leaf of natures book, that the denial of it seems far more stupendious than those great works that demonstrate it. A studious, diligent perusal of this book of the world discovers to us a ladder, whose top reaches to the foot-stool of the Throne of God; the highest link of natures Chain, tied to the the foot of *Jupiter's Chair*: *God* who made all things for himself, looles much of his *design* in setting forth so famous, so finely drawn,

i Am. 9.3

drawn, so magnificent, so many waies beautiful, a structure, by those busied only about what serves their own trifling uses; living ignorant of all the rooms of the house, saving that wherein they lurk, minding nothing of the Architecture, proportion of its parts in relation to each other, and to the entire structure; in which is display'd so much workmanship as was never meant for eyes, that wilfully close themselves, and confront it with the not judging it worthy the speculating; who are more concerned as *Citizens* of any place than of the world; and live so wholly as *Londoners*, that they never find the leisure to worship and live as *men*: that behold so many instructive creatures with no more *discerning eyes*, than *those* whom nature hath denied the *prerogative* of *Reason*, as they deny themselves the *use* of it; so taken up with trifles, or the works of mens hands, that they pass by those of nature, and admire every *Artist*, but the only excellent *God*, who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and makes us wiser than the fowls of Heaven, (*k*) yet they (guided by a reason transcending ours) in some operations (by instinct, not imitation, fancy supplying the place of reason) surpass those of the most cunning workmen. Nor can the benefit be any way so much as by promoting our *piety*. Were we as able to discern the secret workings of nature, as the productions of art, (the Ape of it) managed by Wheels, Engines, Springs, devised by humane wit; and had a perfect insight into the subtilty of their composition, structure of
their

their parts, various texture of their matter, instruments and manners of their regular motions, singular uses and properties in their several ranks, orders, times, and seasons, exact obedience, and significant representation of their supreme *Maker* and *Governour*, the curious and subordinate disposition one creature hath unto another, the exact symmetry and proportion of each part unto the whole; we should find we *trample* upon many things for which we have cause to kneel, and offer praises to God for his excellent greatness. It may well stop our over bold enquiries to comprehend God, we can't *all* he hath put in any the least of his creatures. And what we vulgarly call *ugly* (as a Toad or Serpent) in respect of the *Universe* are as regularly parts as any of the rest, their outward shapes suitable to their inward forms, and those purposes they were intended for, by *him* who hath not only given man a *soul* capable of enjoying himself, but such an *Habitation* for it here, as by the curiosity of its contrivance, number and usefulness of its parts, might be a perpetual and Domestick Testimony of the wisdom of its maker. And if we compare his munificence in creating so many things (the cryers and Heralds of his glory) that never violate the laws of their nature, nor endeavour to disappoint him of his ends, for the necessity and pleasure of rebellious unthankfull man (designed to command this lower world and serve the Creator of it) we must resent an ingenuous shame, and noble disdain, that *that creature* should

should be of all the least *grateful*, that hath received the most *benefits*, that those whom God hath made little lower than the Angels, should debase their nature below the very lowest rank of creatures, be the only jarring string in this *great Instrument* to discompose this divine melody; become the only unprofitable useless part of the creation, and prove the most *unruly* who alone is privileged with reason to *rule* himself, and to refer the creatures that want it, to the Creator's glory: to that end hath he placed us here, as well as to prepare our selves for a better mansion. Even those that have not the Law, not only are a Law unto themselves, (1) but have the creation for their *Library*, *Bible* and *History* of the Almighty, already open in all places where they can run and read without a teacher, for,

2 Rom. 1.
24.

*What e're they see, or where e're they go,
They must see God, whether they will or no.*

In smaller creatures He's set forth, as it were in *Short-Hand*, in *great*, in *Capital* letters; in *inanimates* is a certain kind of dumb *Eloquence*, there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard, their line is gone out through all the earth. and their words to the end of the world. (m) To them the whole world is a *Pulpit*, and all things therein *Regii professores*, Divinity readers, preachers of the invisible God; & almost every particle suggests an *use* of instruction, reproof, or exhortation. The *Mills* inhabitant condemnes our *improvident forecast*; the *Lies of the Field*, our *distrust of Gods Providence*,

2 Psal. 19.
3-4.

dence, &c. No Chymist can make such a rare extract of the creature as the Christians; *they* draw medicines for feavers, gouts, &c. He Antidotes against unbelief, &c. Do but aske the beasts, and they shall reach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee; or speak to the earth, ^{n Job. 12. 7.} and it shall teach thee, and the fishes of the Sea ^{8.} shall declare unto thee. (n) Not only Kings of the earth and all people, but beasts, and all cat-tel, creeping things and flying fowls, dragons and all deeps, mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all Cedars, fire and hail, snow and va-^{p Psal. 148.} por, storm and wind, praise the Lord, and fulfill his word: (o) such as honour not God, in *naturals*, are not *spiritual*, nor of their number that worship him who liveth for ever, and ever, and cast their Crowns before the Throne, saying, thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all ^{p Rev. 4. 10} things, and for thy pleasure they are and were ^{11.} created. (p).

By the
Scriptures

Addicting ones heart to the knowledge of nature, both *invites* and *recompences* our *contemplation*; highly *gratifies* our *intellectual faculties*, without *displeasing* any of *them*, being none of those *criminal pleasures* which injured and incensed *consciences* very much *slay* in the fruition, and turn into *Torments* after; yet must give way to those wherewith the improved opportunities of *serving* and *enjoying* God, are capable of blessing the *pious soul*. As God, so the knowledge of him is infinitely better than of all things he hath made:

made : And he that hath placed so much *delightfulness* in a knowledge wherein he allows his very *enemies* to become great proficientes (many of whom are so taken up with Astrological contemplations of *Heaven*, as they deny themselves time to study in his Book that made it the way of getting thither) hath surely reserved much higher, to sweeten and endear those disclosures of himself, which he vouchsafes to none but such as *know* and *do his will* revealed in his *Word* ; in which is such an admirable Harmony and disposition, as manifestts it the work of the same *wisdom*, that so accurately, divinely composed the *Book of nature*, which leaves all without excuse ; but *this* only able to make us wise to salvation, and affords him that searches for it as for hid treasure, not only light to work-by, and a comfortable warmth while he is working, but animates by the hopes it cherisheth in him, that in due season his paines and diligence shall be rewarded. How admirable is infinite *wisdom* and *goodness* in so tempering his word, as induces the most learned to implore & depend on him for light by leaving amongst many passages that *stoop* to our *weakness*, some that may make us *sensible of it*, and others in so plain familiar a way, as the *illiterate* may see they were not forgotten or overlooked by him, places so obscure, as if it meant purposely to pose, teach us humility if nothing else ; and give us an happy opportunity to evince how great a reverence we pay *Gods word*, upon the single score of its being *so*. We ought to study what we can't

can't understand: By the *welcome* Christ disposes us to give his word, he saith, *what I say thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.* (g) Every new degree of *Scripture knowledge*, is an Instrument to acquire *more*; and ignorance of those places whose sense we seek for, makes us more perfect in the meaning of all the rest. Religious industrious inquirers by experience find, what at a distance deter'd them, was not intended to *frustrate diligence*, but to punish their *laziness*, who thought not such knowledge worthy studying for; and do now *admire* what before they could not *relish*, because they did not *understand*. What at first through a superficial cursory perusal, appeared barren, useless, or tautologies, their sedulous searching into, hath discovered such pregnant uses, as they have equally admired the riches of those texts, and their not discerning it sooner: *Repeated pints* make Hereticks blush to question, and despair to disprove truths attested by more than two or three witnesses; and give Orthodox Believers the satisfaction of having there *Anchor* tied to a three-fold cord, which is not easily broken. The very words, and phrases which clothe the obvious sense, are not only *Emphaticall*, but often *mysterious* and highly *instructional*; affording not only *seasonable fruits*, but the very *leaves* are for the healing of the nations. (r) The strongest Proficients in *Scripture-knowledge*, have the keenest stomachs to this spiritual food. at what a rate did those purchase the Bible, when 'twas *capital* to be found *possessors* of it: Valued

(g) John
13.7.(r) Rev.
2.2.

we not our *bodies* above our *souls*, and *inferiour* things before God; we should esteem the words of his mouth, more than our necessary food; 'twould hugely indeare his word to us, that the *object* of our devotion is the *author* of it. How could our love to him suffer us from frequent entertaining our selves with those Leaves which are at once his *writing* and *picture*; representing, and refreshing us with the vast unmerited Love, and unressembling *Idea* (in the absence of an immediater presence) of our only desirable beloved, that the *Deity* hath framed for Mortalls to apprehend. Some possessed with this fervent flame, placed so much contentment here, that no thoughts so sweetly steal away themselves, & time, as those employed in conversing with God on the *Horeb* of both testaments; the sweetnesse whereof so affecting them, as they could even beg of an *Enemy* this leave to be happy; not without much unwillingnesse obtaining it of their thoughts, to return to sublunary employments; one having *tasted* was so taken with the lusciousnesse of Christ's doctrine, that before much company could not forbear commending the Tree for the Fruit sake (1)

(1) Luke 11.27. Sure *Atheists* only omit frequent perusing these profound contrivances, whose wisdom ingages the *Attention*, & exacts the *wonder* of *Angels*, who for all their native abilities, high prerogatives and employments desire, yea, bow to prie into; (2) disdaining, not to think our *Instructious* worthy their concern, while we disdain a concern for our own instruction. I ap-

peal to the judgement of any carnall Reader un-
 prejudicated, setting aside the Majesty of the
Author, and profitablenesse of the *Subject*, whe-
 ther any *History* be so pleasant as the sacred or
 can compare with it for *Magnificence*, *Antiquity*
 of the matter, sweetnesse of compiling, strang
 variety of memorable Occurrences; Its *Scribes*
 supplying each others *Omission*, according to
 Gods decrees, and Seafons in dispensing his
 myſteries to his Church, that in *Writers* severed
 by ſo many Ages, and Regions, a Harmony
 whoſe ſeeming diſſonances ſeem but to mani-
 feſt the ſincerity, and unconſpiringneſſe of the
Author, their mutuall Irradiations, and ſecret re-
 ferences, perſwade their *Pens* were guided by an
Omniscient Hand, and were but the ſeverall
Secretaries of the ſame *Indiſter*: where he ſtoops to
 our Capacities, is ſomething ſo awfull, ſo clearly
his, as manifelts a Majeltick Prerogative above
 any others. *Eloquent Orators* unſatiſfiedly travel-
 ling through all ſorts of *Humane Volumes*,
 have acquieſt only in *this Divine one*: Be-
 ginning perhaps to read it out of Curioſity, or
 to learn ſome unknown Language 'twas tran-
 ſlated into, or ſome ſuch triviall purpoſe, have
 found themſelves engaged to continue that ex-
 erciſe out of conſcience, having, by the means
 they elected, their reverence and aſſent carried
 away beyond the end they deſigned, in ſpite of
 their indiſpoſition to it, climbing up this *Syc-
 more-tree* only to ſee *Jeſus* have paſſed thence to
 be his *Proſelite* and *Convert*, receiving him joy-
 fully into their Hearts, and houſes. Other com-

posures of *Devotion* will lose with nice pallats at *second reading*; *Acquaintance* here still endears; *Familiarity* breeds not *Contempt* but *Reverence*. If we light of the sense, we can't miss of *truth*, nor be deceived, except we deceive our selves, by presuming we understand it, when indeed we do not: Therefore can't but prize a Book so comprehensive, which *understood*, makes it *safe* for us to *ignore others* as needlesse to *Salvation*, and which *ignored*, are *insufficient*: It containing virtually all *Divine Precepts*, others scatteringly glean out of *Humane Books*: and our selves otherwise affected to find the world depreciated by him that enjoyed all the delights and *Glories* of it; then when we meet with the same from some beggerly *Cynick* that never *tasted* those luscious bewitching pleasures, and need no greater *Philosophy* to despise a *World* he judges of by the scanty share, the narrowness of his condition allows him of the joys of it. When God affirms we cant be *wise* or *happy*, but by being *good*, nor avoid the *greatest Miseries*, but by *eschewing Evil*, it works on us otherwise than the *same* in *Humane Authors*, whose *frailties* make them obnoxious to *mistake*, and *capable to deceive*: *Unwise*, *unthank full* they, and as well *wrong* themselves as the *Scripture*, who choose to read *Gods word* rather in any *Book* than *his own*; but much more, who make *Divertisments* their *Impediment*: To gratifie their fancy, more than their reason: despise, neglect reading this (the best way to *Justifie* it self, & *disabuse* them) than which, scarce any thing

can be more prejudiciall, to a Book that needs to be but *heedfully observed*, and *sufficiently understood* to be *highly reverenc'd*. Their pleasure is so *bewitching*, so *dear* to them, that they like nothing that would divorce, or divert their pursuit; whose *pride*, and *laziness* dare plead *Multiplicity of weighty avocations* against the *one thing necessary*: The *importantest employments*, are the *Study*, and *Glory of God*; and sure they that pretend *want of leisure* for their neglect of *reading the Scriptures*, must be able to give a rare account of all the *portions of their Time*, to make that passe for a *Misemployment* of it, that is laid out towards the purchase of a *Happy Eternity*. He ever makes an ill Bargain that gets Hell to Boot, who to gain so inconsiderable a possession as the whole world, shall part with his own soul. So earnestly is it *injoined*, that scarce any can think the neglect of reading it no fault, save those that are guilty of it, because *it prophesies no good concerning them*. Their vicious scandalous lives make them deny the Scripture, for fear of being obliged for meer shame to live more conformable to it. 'Tis the *Interest*, not the *Reason* of these *guilty Malefactors* that makes them find fault with this *Statute-Book*, that finds so much fault with them. Their *Censures* and *irreligious expressions* are as *Apologies* they judge necessary to palliate their sins, or as *Acts of Revenge* for their being exposed in all their deformities to the *Eye of the World*, and of their own consciences in the *Bible*, and do rather shew what they would have men believe of them, than

what themselves believe of the Scripture; by seeming to *slight* which they hope to have there *vices* imputed rather to a Superiority of their Reason over that of others; than a Servitude of their Reason to their passions; when cast upon perusing it, they do it in so perverse a manner, as if they went to revenge themselves on that unwelcome opportunity: Their *Observation* is worse than their *Neglect*; They look into it insidiously, not as Disciples, but as spies, not to weigh the obligingness, but to quarrel at the unreasonableness, difficulty, impossibility of its *Injunctions*; not to direct their *practice*, but to excuse their *prevarications*: They contrive, not how they may comply with it, but how they may best bend it to comport with them: They rebate its edge, or turn it only against such of their corruptions as they have least kindness for: They weigh its Precepts with no other design but that, of taking the *lights* those to which their constitutions, or other circumstances carry least repugnance: They come unto it, not as to a *Law*, but to a *Marker*, cheapen what they best like, and leave the rest for other Customers, nor will they take *faith's word*, that, *so it is*; unless Reason will be her Surety, and shew them *how*. Profane Wretches stamp their own Image, and Superscription on Gods Coin; Torture it to confess that which was never in it, and their own *wits* to pervert the *Holy Scriptures* expressions to deliver their obscene thoughts: A thing so easie, as almost any man hath the wit to talk at their *Profane Rate*, that will

will but allow himself the sawcy boldnesse, and Hellish Liberty to contemn, yea directly and immediately to provoke God, by making him the Subject of their derision, and sport with that word he so solemnly declares his *mind* by to Mankind, and which shall judge them at the last day. But considering persons will scarce deem him a *Wit*, that will venter to be damned to be thought one; or admire his *plenty* who cannot make an *Entertainment* without furnishing out the table with a *John Baptist Head*; nor please the *Fancy*, without offending the *Conscience*; nor say any thing *well*, but what is *Ill* to say: Never using their *Wits*, but to gratifie their *own* or *others Lusts*, nor the *Bible* except in their *Tavern-Songs*, only as anchovis, to entice the company to drink the longer, instead of employing their parts, in working for the Sanctuary, by cloathing excellent thoughts, in suitable winning dresles, the way to have their names written, at once in Heaven, and in the immortal leaves of Fame, prostitute them to indite licentious irreligious ones, that argue more a depressed soul, than an *elevated Fancy*: A *sin* so unprofitable, as scarce gets them any thing but an *ill name* amongst good men upon Earth, and a *worser place* amongst bad men in Hell; by making their *Envy* and *Impiety* so *malicious* and *disinterested*, that they will endeavour to do *religion harm* though it be to do *themselves* no good, and have no excuse of declining their conscience in compliance to their senses: nor will the highest favour of Applaus, and the being cried

up for a wit, so repair the punishment of profaness, but that its wretched sufferers will find but small satisfaction, in having their name celebrated in other *Books*, while 'tis blotted out of that of *Life*: And can't but think that wisdom the greatest folly, who to tempt praises they seldom hear, provide themselves Torments they shall ever feel; and that that pains and time spent in studying corrupt discourses, was a hewing fuel for Hell flames, where they shall be weeping and gnashing their Teeth, while they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever (u)

(v) Dan.
12.3.

By our
late Civil
Wars.

A Treble portion we enjoyed of Gods mercies, to mankind in generall, to the Christian world in particular; our lines fallen in pleasant places: from our Fathers will in our mother-tongue, we might take counsell as a man of his friend: To us chiefly have been committed the Oracle of God; but have been exercised with such strange intermingled providences, as is a Theam worthy the best *Historian Pen*, and choycett *Christian Meditation*. We have had such unexpected wonderfull appearances of a *Divine Hand*, owning, preserving, rescuing Innocency in such eminent Exigences, as Experience seals that Proverb infallible, *In the mount will the Lord be seen*. Such remarkable events of mens vain projects, Gods infinite eye so piercing through all pretences, as *Justice* hath required no other *Accuser* than their *own Consciences*, bringing to light (not-

(notwithstanding all possible care used to the contrary, such private consultations, contrivance and practices as evince, there's nothing hid that shall not be known, but what is done in secret shall be published on the House-top. How sad the condition of these discomposed dilacerated nations, what clancular actings of Satans machivalls (who cared not to set a whole world on fire, utterly to roit their own eggs by, and build themselves monuments of the Churches ruines) how daring the insolencies and attempts of unstable minds, acted by the various and quotidian conduct of changeable and domestical *Interests* against our *Moses* and *Aarons*, hath been so well known at home and abroad, as hath rendered us a shame to our selves and a *Ludibrium* to the world? The untimely death of Princes, the frequent expirations and vicissitudes of estates and Governments, servants set in great dignity, and the rich sitting in low places, persons of mean extraction, leaving their Cottages and dwelling in Kings Palaces, while *Sovereignty* forced to take up the *Lodging of a Crow*: *Beggars* lifted from the *Dunghill* to the *Throne*, while *Majesty* justled off, and not allowed the *Liberty* of a Subject: The dolefull earthquakes and concussions in *Church* and *States*, the wild pernicious *Opinions* and horrid *practices* among us, seemed as if the scene of the *ten Tribes* was translated into these *Nations*, and we making hast to be a *Lo-rubamah*, (w) surely 'twas through the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, that our Land was watered with bloud. (x) And the People as the fewel

(w) Hof.
1.6(x) Eze. 3.
26.

of

(y) ¹⁹ of fire, no man sparing his Brother; (y) when
War was proclaimed in our Gates, and our
 mighty men awakened, and all the men of war
 (z) ² drew near and stood up, (z) when our *Cornets*
 were turned into *Fifes*, our *Dances* into *Mor-*
ches, and our *Banquets* into want of *Bread*, our
Livery-Gowns into *Buff-Coats*, our *Suites* of *Gold*
 into *Glittering Armour*; our *Beavers* into *Helmets*,
 and those into a *Myter*, and *Infallibility* inspired
 with the sound of a *Trumpet*, the pride of the
Cupboard and the *Fingers Glory* into *Souldiers*
Salleries, and the price of *Blood*, our *Walking-*
Staves into *Halberts*, our *Girdles* into *Belts*, and
 our *Cassocks* into *Coats of Mail*, our *Stately stru-*
ctures into *Garrisons*, our *Dwelling Houses* into
Prisons, our *Temples* into *Stables*, *Jakes*, *Places* of
Stench, and *Filthinesse*, the *Abomination* of *De-*
solation, standing in the *Holy place*, and the *House*
 of *Praier* a *Den of Thieves*: When our *Pruning*
Hooks were beaten into *Spears*, and our *Plow-*
shares into *Swords*, sharpened, not among the
Philistines, but at *Sion*, which always makes it
 cut the keenest. Woe, and Alas to such sad
Encomasticks, when men engaged in *Designs*
 not on intuition of their *Lawfulnessse*, but *Profit*,
 and never enquired into the *Justice* of the quar-
 rel but the rate of the pay: when there were
 such *Tigers* and *Fryars*, as would rifle for
 drams of *Silver*, into the *Bowels* of their own
Flesh, and either *Kill*, or *Die* for a *Day's Wages*,
 Hewing down men like *Brambles*, and butcher-
 ing them like *Oxen*, defacing *Gods Image* as if
 it were but battering down a *painted Picture*—
 pening

pening the Conduits of life to gush forth till the last drop were their mirth; wounds their seats of Activity, bloud their Cordiall, crying groans their musick, gasty faces their looking-glasses, shivering bones the reliques of their puissance, and dead carcasses the emblems of their glorious Triumphs, when the noise of Drums and Trumpets deafned our ears to the cries and groans of oppressed Sufferers, and Regall Laws must give place to private ones: When late down to meat we suspected the intrusion of armed, uninvited guests; and our next nights lodging to be in Prison, or out of our Beds, when we were rather Stewards than owners of our estates, and had rather the Trouble than Advantage of their Managery; when we strove to supplant, surprize, destroy our nearest Friend, or Kinsman, and our bloud was poured out as dust, and our Flesh as the dung; (a) and widdows encreased like the Sands of the Sea, (b) when members of the same body carried themselves as if of a different world. They who once lay in one anothers bosome, could hardly endure to stand in the same seat, or join in the same Family Duty; praying with, and for one another before, now one against another: Division of Hearts hindred the building of the new Jerusalem; while contending about the Windows, we had almost lost the Foundation of the Church; when pretence of inward Sanctity in some, devoured their outward decency, and was suborn'd to legitimate those practices, the recall-solid one forbids and execrates; and God said

(a) Ze. 1.
17.
(b) Jer. 31.
2.

said to be Honoured, and exalted by those ways whereby men would think themselves affronted & vilified, when faith was made subservient to extinguish love, Charity banished to fetch home truth, and a Coal from the Altar to set the Temple it self on fire: When our slightest problems were writ in blood; Thousands made naked to keep the surplice off a few mens Backs; pulling down Churches in displeasure at the Windows: when our minute differences became quarrels, by disputes raised about a Pin, or Nail of the Temple, shook and endangered the whole Fabrick; and robbed the Church of *Fraternal Unity*, the surest Cement and Support: The *Laws* trampled upon, for the preservation of *Right*, *Justice* violated for its own security; *Oaths* broken for the conservation of *Faith*; The *People* oppressed for their *Welfare*; The *Nation* intbrall'd for its *Liberty*, forced to maintain Tyranny for its freedom. When Christian Religion at once was violated & defamed, not only her Precepts broken, but her self aspersed with the filthy consequences of that disobedience brought in, to abett seditious practices: when men could say Grace over the foulest Crimes, and consecrate them to the use of a good cause, when they should have been doing Gods work, were hiding the Babylonish garment; instead of driving Nails into Gods Temple to lessen it, were driving a wedge of Gold into their own Coffers: when neither the Command of God, the Authority of Laws, the Love of Peace, the Fear of War, the Sa-
cred

ered Unction, Royall Crown, nor Scepter it self, could awe the bloody insolent Sword, secure and defend the *Soveraign's Head*: when men judged of the *Justice* by the *Succeſſe* of their *Attempts*; and that their cause was *approved of God* because *prosperous*, when our Hands were embrewed in our Neighbours blood, Ambitious to be unjust Conquerors, and Honour sought in war, which formerly was not to be Crown'd with boasting Triumph: Be thou, Oh *Charles* (the first) added to our deplorable Trophies, who the *Fortune of war* caused to be esteemed *faulty*, and was looked upon as a *Crime* in thee to be *overcome*. Our *War* was (both a Sin and a Judgement) like to swallow up the one, and *Victory* the other, and the *publick* still sure to be a loser: *War* for the *Kingdom* against the *King*; for his *Authority* against his *Person*: The *Soveraign* arraigned before his *Subjects*: *Majesty* it self accused of *Treason*, and barbarously slain (with an Axe whetted at *Rome*,) that they might seize on his *Inheritance*; let a Curtaine there be drawn over our sorrows, a veil over our shame. Then did *Royall Majesty* descend into the dust, and the Glory, Peace, and Safety of the Nation with him. How then did all *Loyall* Hearts Throb and Tremble? How did all faces gather blacknesse, that were not steeled with Rebellion, and Impudence? How did the whole Land sit as a widdow, desolate, and forsaken? So that our very *Victories* were *Tragicall*, and our *Triumphs* mournfull, and the *Conquerors* with the *Conquer-*
ed

ed had cause to sit down in *Tears*; For the Almighty had called for a Sword against us through all the Land, which cut off the righteous with the wicked: The dead bodies of his servants were made bridges over ditches, and given as meat unto the Fowls of Heaven, and the Flesh of his Saints unto the beasts of the Earth; their blood shed like water round about the Kingdom, and none to bury them: So that we were become a derision to our neighbouring Nations, a By-word among the Heathens, a terror to our selves; Troubled on every side, without were fightings, within fears, and none had Peace or was secure under his own Roof; but every Heart melted, and all hands were feeble, every spirit fainted, and all knees were as water because of the spoilers rapine: and a man was made an offender for a word;

(e) and a Sword was sharpened to make a sore slaughter, and the Lord pleaded against us with blood, and with Fire, and with Brimstone, his fury was upon his face, and a great shaking in our Land: (d) And yet the confused noise of battels, and warriors, the rattling of wheels, and of praunsing Horses, the jumbling of Charriots, and of the bright Sword, and glittering Spear, the multitude of slain, and the great number of carcasses (So that we stumbled upon corpses, (e) and upon garments rowled in blood) (f) did not awaken us. As to many might it not be said, we are a talking, not a repenting People; if our tongues are better, so are not our Hearts, our Bibles,

our

(e) 1st Is. 29. 21.

(d) Jer. 13. 12. 13.
Ecc. 27.

(e) nah. 3.

(f) 1st Is. 5.

our Pulpits have taught us little but a Scripture Language, a Sanctuary Phrase; we repent in Adages, or ordinances only, not by ordering our feet; turn from one opinion to other principles, from one faction to another sect, but who from his evill ways: we swim in other Seas, but like the *Porcupine*, the change of water makes us not lose our prickles; shift places but like *Serpents*, carry our poison with us whereever we creep; turn Profelites, not to God, but two-fold more the Children of wrath. Were ever so many Pulpits despised? so many unregenerating Sermons? unmollifying Lectures? many watch over souls, but how few win them? many Counsellors, but who is a Father? Our Faith is a distraction, our repentance a contagion, a corruption. We talk much of the Gospel, and reformation, but when shall we once be Evangelicall, and the reformed Church? We are gotten, we say, out of *Aegypt*, but do we not carry *Aegypt* into *Canaan*? and make the Land of promise, a Land of provocation? Fled farther from *Rome*, and gone into *Sodom*? Left her corruption in Doctrine, but kept those in manners. Oh sad separation, for all the ground we have left behind us, have we left in the Red Sea, or in the Wildernesse, or upon the Bank of *Jordan*, our evill ways? What reformation to be seen amongst us but beating down Crosses? clashing windows? demolishing a font? new placing a communion Table? plucking off that abominable Rochet? hewing of May-poles? but hath
this

this reformation cleansed away sin & are we made more morall than Turks? more pure than Infidells? Is there not as much pride and covetousness, craft and perditionnesse, pcevillnesse and contention, as among *Barbarians*, and *Scythians*? And how did that little blood lett in others boil up in scum, and rage? we impatiently murmured under those burthens, our sins prepared, and other mens laid upon us; and disclaimed *Gods relief*, by indirect attempts of our own; yet took it very ill, that he lett us to the Successes of them, that he prospered not those methods he had interdicted, and made us Triumphant, not only over our enemies, but himself too. We laid boundlesse expectations upon the Justice of our cause, and as if we had extremely obliged God by not being *Traytors*, thought he wronged us extremely that he made us not *Victors*: we seemed to think *Loyalty witchcraft*; that like a spell it was able to keep us *invulnerable*, not only against our *Enemies*, but our selves, and so countercharm all our *Crimes*; that they should only be active to please not to hurt us. How many had little *private Rebelions* of their own, even while they opposed the more *publick*; that owed their zeal to their *spleen*? and did not so much *love* those they fought for, as *Hate* those they fought against. The profession of Holinesse their adversaries had put on, more averted these *Liber-tines* from them, than all their reall *Crimes*: Their professing to advance the power of godlinesse, allur'd them to contend, not for the liberty

liberty of their Country, but their Lusts, so could with no Justice expect a reputation, or successe from that cause, which they at once Help't to defame and defeat: And the soberer 'tis to be suspected were inspir'd more by the spirit of opposition than of piety, from whom the Liturgy never had so much veneration, as when the Directory was set up against it: A perverse kind of zeal or devotion, kindled only by *Antiperistasis* (not of that pure flame which descends from Heaven) excited by interdict, and deadned by invitation.

He then makes *Civill wars* to cease, and stilleth the tumult of the people (g) and returns our Peace, before we had forsaken our sins; As if he meant to try our *Ingenuity* that we who had been so much worse than *Beasts* under those former methods, and no stripes disciplin'd us, might have this advantage to redeem our credit, and be drawn with the cords of a man. After the shedding of *Royall Blood*, to the shame and reproach of *Religion* and the *Nation*, and perpetuall infamy of the *Affairs* of it. He disappoints our Anointed's *Enemies* confident Hopes; of finding him among the *Slain*, or *Prisoners*; and delivers *Good Men* of their afflictive fears for his Jeopardy, and of ever seeing him on his Throne; except he sworne to it in the blood of his Subjects; makes rebellious *Absolons* Executioner, our Lawfull Sovereigns Sanctuary; provides him Safety & Favour in a strange Land. And though the dangerous oppositions of our provocations,

By our
peaceable
settlement.
2 Psal. 65.
7.

insolent by contending against Gods goodness, made it far more reasonable to look for a Hand upon the wall, writing a vilible irrecoverable sentence of Extirpation, than secretly and powerfully working deliverance behind it: When we had set our selves in a Detiance of his Judgement, he layed as it were an Ambush of mercy for us; gave a *Victory* without a war; and *surprised* us with *Safety* by such indiscernable ways, turning again our captivity, that we were like them that dream (*b*) He

b Psal. 126.

1. bowed the Hearts of *England* even as one man, so that they sent this word to the King, *return thou, and all thy servants, that all the people of the Land may rejoyce, and the City may be at quiet; so the King returned, and the Nobles went to meet and conduſt the King.* (*i*) He erects his *Throne*

i 2 Sam. 19.

14. 15.

in as calm a manner, as was the *Temple*, without the noyse of Swords, Guns, Axes, and Hammers, when we had been so long dashing to pieces one against another, and all things reeling, and breaking into confusion, he composes and orders them as before; Every one sitting under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree, eating the fruits of his own Labours, and none to make him afraid, nor danger of *Sequestration*, but from our own *Luxury*, or of being *mocked* into his Grave by *Shews*, and *Pagantries* of Justice that will but keep in the boundaries of *known Laws*. But no sooner, is the *Scepter* redeemed from *Bondage*, and restored to its *Master*, but the whole Nation is made loose; *Licentiousness*

in-

invades the People; And we suffer smiling fur-
ries; Luxury revengeth weapons, and *England*
wips away war with a *lazy peace*; giddy head-
ed Liberty breaks its Reins, turnes, waxes hot,
burnes, and swelling with successe tramples
on *Ordinances* with a profane Heel: in-
fected we are with filthinesse; and a debauched
company of People are inhabitants of a
dirty Sty. When he had made Peace with-
in our Borders, and filled us with the finest of
the Wheat; (*k*) our *Late unhappinesse* nor pre-
sent favour prevailed with us: for his blessings
we rejoiced, but grew rather wanton than
thankfull; we entertained the change with a
joy too profuse, but not enough religious. We saw
that *great things* were done for us, wherefore
we were glad, but did not so much consider
that the Lord *had done them*; (*l*) and so were
rather affected with the rarity and profitable-
ness, than mercy and kindnesse of the dis-
pensation. Our transports were such as ex-
hausted themselves in their noise. We ex-
pressed our joy in Bone-fires, and it vapoured
away in the smoke; there wanted that
mixture of *Pie-y*, which should have fixed
that volatile passion. We rioted and surfeited
on his blessings, feasted our lusts on his fa-
vours, dishonoured, spurned, kicked against him
in the face of all his bounties. The Oil of
his mercy made us more nimble, and active
in seats of Impiety, and his creatures mighty
to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle
strong drink; (*m*) our requitall to him for com-
pelling

k Psal. 147.

14.

l Psal. 139.

22.

m Isa. 52:2.

posing our nationall intestine Broils, were to give Reins to our open Rebellion against Heaven; for restoring our *Sovereign* to rise up against our *God*; for removing the *Disorders* of Church and State to bring them into our *Hearts* and *Lives*; we put off not only *Pity* but *Humanity*, from the most benigne purposes, extracted nothing but our own mischiefs. We were the poorer for his Liberalities, and the worser for his goodnesse. Our *sins* by being *common*, made us approve *them* by being successfull; because God kept silent, we thought he was such a one as our selves (*n*) undervalued, or denied a Dicty; thinking nothing to be sin, but what hath punishment for its consequence, no fruit in the Garden forbidden, if a flaming Sword secure it not.

* Psal. 50.
31.

* 2 Sam. 7.
28.

Having chastised and tried to reduce us by interior Instruments and Lictors among our selves; making one mans sin the punishment of another, as if he had the same jealousie for his Honour, which *Joab* had at the siege of *Rabab* for *David*; (*o*) and feared to be rival'd in the Glory of our Ruine; He takes us into his own Hand; marks us out as he did *Pharaoh* to be the Trophies of his own peculiar Vengeance; appearing signally against us in all the dreadfull Solemnities of an enraged Enemy. Three years he waited seeking the fruit of his providences, and found none; yea granted one year more, to the intercession of his own goodnesse. To testifie then our ways did not please

please him, he makes a Nation at peace with us, become our *Enemy*. (p) Where if he delivered us from their *Fury*, and prospered our Forces with remarkable *success*, yet prevented a *Totall Victory* over them; as if he designed to hold this *Rod* over us, till we gave some better proofs of our being *Humbled*, and *Reformed* by it; and that which cost so much *Blood* and *Treasure*, must be accounted (as 'tis threatened q) a *Judgement* for our abuse of peace, p Pro. 16.
7.
q Lev. 26. and incorrigibleness under former Judgements: As there's required for war a *Lawfull Authority*, a *just Cause*, and a *right intension*; so it must not be out of *Hatred*, but with a desire to preserve life in the height of *Battle*. The *lives* of the *vanguished* are not wholly at the mercy of the *Conqueror*, who had need to distinguish well between a *Conqueror* and a *Cut-throat vindicative War*, must be moderated, that a man be not a too *severe righter* of his *own injuries*; he ought to be satisfied with the *Victory*, and as much as may be, leave *revenge* to God. The principall *Ambassadors* ought to be slain, and not the *generality* which are drawn in to be *Parties*; yea *killing* is allow'd, but only against *obstinate* and *desperate Adversaries*: *Conquest* must end with the *least damage* both of the *Enemies* and *inhabitants*; for the *Community* cannot be touched without the *Hazard* of many *Innocents*. 'Tis no little misery to be *necessitated* by Arms to maintain our *own right*; for war is the extream act of *vindictive Justice*; not approveable to God, for

any other than a *desperate Remedy*. As it is sometimes necessary, to mostly *unjust*, always *evil*, and *fighting* is *publick murder*, it so constituted that there is a culpable scruple in the close, and any other end be proposed besides *Peace*. Therefore *Noble Dispositions* have still shewed their propensions to *Peace* (though *Victors*) calling for a cessation of Arms (whereas necessity wrung it from the overmastered) letting passe no opportunity of making spare of blood, and have deemed it an *inhumane cruelty* to shed it, where they have not first proffered fair conditions of *Amity*; the *Refusal* whereof is justly punished with the *Sword of Revenge*; or one drop more than that which was necessary out of insolency, and blood-thirstynesse. *Pestilence*, and *Famine* frequently follow this *fore Judgement*. (r) *Slaughter* is not the *only effect* of *war*, It destroyes the *lives* of many, but blatts the *joys* and *supports* of more. The Land is the garden of *Eden* before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness yea, and nothing shall escape them. (s) Ours was *war* upon *war*; *Forraign* upon *civill*, not against *strangers*, but *Allys*; not with *Pagans*, *Papists*, but *Protestants*; what will the *Heathens* say? what ever either nation gains, *Religion* is like to be a *Losse*. It may well break our hearts, that so many are destroyed, whom Christ purchased with his own blood, and the *Ocean* turned into a *Red Sea*, by *that* of *Israel*. *Victory* lies not in the *cause* but in the *God* that owns it. Many a *just* *Business*

r Ezek. 14.
31.

s Joe. 23.

is crossed, for a punishment to the Agent. Gods people for the accursed thing, may be defeated by the Benjamites (z) and fly before the men of Ai. (v) Tis no strange thing to see Israel troubled by an Achan, or the Ark taken captive from off the shoulders of Hopni, and Phineas. If we waged war for reparation of publick wrongs, and its ground not only policy, but religion, yet while some had rather been destroyed by the Enemy than live to see their Prince have the Honour of saving, and defending them, others strive to disoblige and incense him to whom we appealed, and seemed to enter prohibitions in Heaven against our desired enjoyment of successe. By nourishing our Lusts from whence cometh wars (w) we fought against our selves, put a Sword into our Enemies Hands, and provoked God to destroy us; as if our notorious fighting against him by our Trespases, would oblige him to right us, and that when our Host goes forth against our Enemy, we ought to keep to every wicked thing. (x)

Jud. 20.

Joi. 7.

w Jam. 4. 1.

x Deu. 22.

And lest this alone should not be physick enough for our maledy, Comes forth a destroying Angell, pouring out off his full viol such a Horrid Infection into our Ayr, as scarce we or our Forefathers ever tasted of. Whilest busied against men Abroad, God takes us into his own hand at Home, and surprizes us with new feares from himself by the noysome pestilence, which Cut off, from one City, in Less than

England called upon,

nine months about 100000 Inhabitants, and Chased away more from their Habitations; So that we had something of a *wilderness*, in a City, The *streets* formerly Throng'd with *strangers*, now destitute of *Neighbours*; When few to be met but such, as lookt wan with grief, fear, or sickness; when as many dead Carcasses hurried along the streets iⁿ night, as living persons walking in the day; Habitations made both Hospitals and Charnell-houses; where the sick without hope, for want of Help, die without Comfort, Consume without Interriment, or are Carry'd away without Sheet or Coffin save their Cloathes; Thrown by Hundreds into a pit, and not a friend following to shed a Tear at their Funerall, except at a distance crying: *pray Bury my Dead*, when such noyse of Bells; Complaints for loss of friends; The living labouring night and day, scarce enough, and new ground must be purchased to Bury the Dead, Heapes upon Heapes. The *mother* perhaps must Carry her Tender Infant to the grave, the *Husband* the *wife* of his Bosome, and a nearest Relation forc't to be both *priest* and *gravesman*; scarce determinable whether the Drops that fell from their faces were the sweat of their Browes, or Tears of their Eyes. The Diseased groaning for Extremity of their paines, and Rejoycing exceedingly if they could find the grave. The sound weeping for the miseries of the sick; longing for deliverance of their Family from the Burden of the flesh; some Eating their Bread with Quaking, and drinking with Trem-

Trembling and Carefullness, for fear 'twould be their last, whilest others perishing for want of it. The sight of *this weekes Bill*, appearing to many, but as A Reprieve till the next; So that they had no Rest, but the Lord gave them a Trembling Heart; and failing of Eyes, and sorrow of mind, and their life did hang in doubt before them, and they feared day and night having no Assurance of their Life; (y) How then did the City sit solitary that was full of people; and became as a *widow* that was great among the *nations*; she wept sore in the night, and her tears were on her Cheekes; Among all her lovers she had none to Comfort her, all her friends had dealt treacherously with her, and by leaving her became her Enemy. And yet in our Blackest Bills, God writ but 50 for 100. How came it that our *Houses* were not all *disinhabited*, or *one* wherein not *one* dead, That our City was not turn'd into a very *golgotha*, (and our fields into graves,) for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein: For though *Death* surpris'd all Conditions, in all places, at all Times, in our streets, at our Labour, in our sleep, at our meat, in our Clossets, alone, in Company, some in the very Act of sin, others dead before they thought themselves sick, dreaming of nothing less than dying, the Bell Touling constantly, carrying some of our Fellow-servants to Gods Bar, yet the *mounds* of so many graves, the sad Charrecters writ on our neighbours Dores, the sight of so many Carcasses *Death* lead in Triumph

y Dec. 22.
65.66.

umph before our *own*, did not preach us into Repentance, but even Extinguished Humanity, brought in a kind of Ferity and Barbarousnesse among us, rendering us vilinous to men, and Blasphemous against God; desperate upon the prospect of our danger, or presumptuous on remedies, or Contemplation of our Escape. The very greatness and Commonnesse of our *misery*, made us so Careless, stupid, senseless, that we could sleep amidst dying groans, dance amongst graves, Revel at Funeralls, drink healths on Coffins, be obscene among the Dead, steal winding sheets out of the very Chambers of death, Eating and drinking, swearing and Rioting, marrying and giving in marriage, while the flood was sweeping nigh all away, and at the very pits brink thought not of death, but lived, as if by that Time all mortals were hurry'd out of the world, and that none were left standing there that should taste of death. Even in the height of it, we mis't not to be as Luxurious as we were able; and if some of our Lusts were at all less Rageing, t'was only because they were starved into a Little Tameness; the supplies and Conveniences cut off which should maintain our Riot. Those publick Humiliations and Intercessions recommended to the Country, as well by the Command of Authority, as the Common distresse, were cast off without the subtraction of either of those motives; so unmindfull of the Afflictions of Joseph, that we could not afford one day in a month for a solemn Reflection on them; and sure we are not

not less wanting to our selves, than others in such neglects; the office being no less designed for Antidote than Cure, to prevent a Judgment where it is not, as to Remove it where it is; and if we will neither deprecate on our own behalf, nor Intercede on others, we are as Improvident, as uncharitable, and may justly expect the fatall event of both; so that the Rest of the men which were not killed by the plague, Repented not of their murders, nor of their Fornications, nor of their Thefts, nor of the works of their Hands. (z).

z Rev. 20.
12.

This Judgment being thus forced to raise its Seige; at the Heeles of it marches *devouring Flames*. For ere the destroying Angell had finished his work here, and was Raging in many parts of the nation, as though the Infected Ayre had been too kind and partiall to us, and had only destroy'd the vile and Refuse, and spared the *greatest of the people*; As though the grave had surfeited with our dead bodyes and was loth to go on in the execution of Gods displeasure: He Employ'd a more furious Element which might in a more lively manner represent to us, the *kindling* and *Continueing* of his *wrath* against us which was Attended to a very Excessive Heat, that thus poured out it selfe not only like (a) but in fire: In so stupendious a manner desolating the *glory of our land*, that no Humane fury could have procured or even wish't the like vastation and Ruins; and what neither Foreign nor Domestick Enemies could in a succession

By the late
dismal fire
of London.

a La. 2. 4.

cession of many Ages effect, one blast of the breath of his displeasure who is a Consuming fire, performed in a moment: Those whom the King of Terrors frighted from their Habitations, had not been long returned full of Resolves to Redeem by double Dilligence, their loss of Trades and Time, but a dreadfull fire ceases upon our great Metropolis, defaces the Beauty and splendor of England, wherles into flames that glorious mart of Trade, and covers that Queen of Cities with its ashes, making her both Funerall pile and urne to her self; Consuming in 4 days above 13200 of our Houses, the price of many years Labour, more wealth than an ordinary Arithmititian can numerate; with those publick monuments and ornaments, wich had out-lasted the Injuries of many hundred years, in the space of far, less hours. The *detrimēt* sustained in our *Civill interest*, nothing but time and Experience can give a full estimate of. Its sad Consequences are unknown, clouded in its owne smoak; yet must needs Cast forth some of her Ruines, desolations, want of Trade, and poverty upon the neighbou Towns and whole nation. A fire which began with that unexpected violence, and spread with that Horror, and Rag'd with that Furie, and Continued so long with that Irresistable force, esteeming Brick as stubble, stone as straw, and Brasse as Rotten wood, that Laugh'd at the shaking of an Engine, and despised all Resistances in its way; that made the streets to Boil like a pot, and the Houses like a pot of oyntment; that
made

made a path to shine after it; one would have thought it a *Type* at least of the *universal Conflagration*: so full of Dread and Astonishment, that nothing less than *Hell flames* can awaken him, who by it is not wrought upon to lye down in his shames, and his Confusion to cover him; because God hath Covered the daughter of Sion with a Cloud, and cast down from Heaven unto the Earth the Beauty of Israel, and Remembred not his foot-stool in the day of his Anger, (b) Laying in Ashes such a City, as I expected not to see on this side the Heavenly; making our magnificent *Temples*, not Habitations for owles, but Ruinous heapes, and Spectacles of desolation. Had only the scenes of our Luxury and fraud been destroyed, this might have sent us with more fervency to the places of our Devotion; and we might have frequented *Gods house* the Better for being destitute of *our own*; but when these also are made parts of the Common heap, when our holy and beautiful houses, where our fathers praised him, are burnt with fire (c), 'Tis a sad Testimonial that our *very Religion* was provoking, that the pageant-like piety that we deposited in our Churches only to make a shew with on holy-days, served only to defile those holy places, and render them so poluted, as required no slighter purgation than that of fire: Of our comely hospitalls, stately halls and pallaces, nothing remaining, but a strange mass and Labyrinth of naked steeples, useles Chymnies, fragments of Ragged walls, amidst heapes of stones and Rubbish. In stead
of

of sweet smells a stink; burning for well set houses, ashes for Beauty, a spirit of Heaviness for the garment of praise. Yet while most were only Amaz'd and Terrified, others in stead of letting go, increased their sins under the Judgment; using it as a *Happy opportunity* to steal, while the Judg himself before their faces was doing Execution, and were glad of Satan's Commission to carry away their neighbours goods, while the fire of God was falling upon them, (d) and entered into the Houses of his people to lay hands on their substance in the day of their calamity. (e) Their designs of advantages took all thoughts off their own turning; imploying them to gather up the Reliques of others Ruines; the spoyles of a common wreck to increase or Repair the breaches of their own fortunes; so they esteem'd it not as a *Judgment*, but *kindness* of Heaven, to advance their own private interest; and interpreted those loud calls to repentance, invitations to eat, drink, and be merry; because they had more goods layd up for them. And others turned not to him that smote, because they saw an advantage arising from the blow, for they said in the pride and stoutness of their hearts, the bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewen stone, the Sycomores are cut down, but
 Job 1. 16. we will change them into cedars; (f) and not a few, in Requital to God for their preservation, evil intreated, yea raised themselves on those whom God had cast down; By their mercyleess cruelty adding affliction to the afflicted; by
 Obad. 13. their
 Is. 9. 9, 10.

their rigorous exaction of rates for carriages, houses, provision, and withholding contribution from them to whom it was given, beyond the laws of reason, equity, conscience, or common humanity; By shutting up their *Bowells* against those whom God had *stript naked*, they took away the sheaf from the hungry, and caused the naked to lye without cloathing, that they had no covering in the cold: so that men groaned from out of the City, and the soul of the needy cryed out, yet they think God layeth it not to their charge. And those compassions which the novelty at first gave us to sufferers in this kind, seems now quite extinct; so unconcern'd are we grown to every thing that touches us not in our individualls, as if we owned no relation to the species of man-kind, though backed also with that closer tie which the spiritual consanguinity hath superadded. Those that escaped, had an equall share in the procuring cause of the Judgment; their great Infeebledness of what others groan under, is not only a dangerous *symptome*, but a probable *means* of drawing the like calamity on our selves; when God sees we will *suffer* nothing by way of *offence* and *sympathy*, 'tis but equal we have our part in a more direct and immediate infliction; and feel what we would not compassionate. How few eye the primary efficient, meritorious *cause*, or mortifie the *main incendiary*; but throw the desert off themselves, on other persons, or such a party, whom they would punish, if in Gods stead; as if they must needs

needs displease him, which *doth* themselves: so tossing the *guilt* from one another, it remains among us *all*; none *amending* himself, while he expects it only from those, for whose sake we say, this *evill* is come upon us. What industry so ever hath been used to intitle the negligence or designs of men unto our overthrow; yet sure, never any Judgment had more *Legible marks* of Gods immediate hand; such as shew he meant to revenge the abuse of his former gentle methods; that those who would not be reformed by smaller corrections, might find a Judgment worthy of God. By how much the more there is not an apparent author of so vast a ruine, by so much the more evident is the power of his Almighty arm. Its raging fi recuels, quick dispatch (a parish for every hour) spoiles, destructiveness, duration, time (when few friends at home, and many enemies abroad) day, and place it began, dryness of the season, standing and increase of the wind, irresistableness even against it, and all other oppositions, unexpected stop, intatuation of the people, &c. are so many *dreadfull remarkable evidences of divine wrath.*

Quis talis fando temperet àlachrymis.

To what purpose do we rail against obscure authours of our destruction, since our sins have spread abroad the flames, and added nourishment to their furious heat? although extravagant suspicion make not many of us guilty, yet
if

if we confess the truth, all had a hand therein, and we but act against our selves, by complaining of what we deserved. Oh! *England*, thou long since owed this *Burnt sacrifice* to Heaven: nor are thy crimes yet expiated; unless by good actions thou cancell former pretermiſſions, in vain thou hopeſt incensed anger is appeased.

One would have thought our hive being burnt, the Bees our Lusts should have been smothered in the smoak; but in stead of that, they fly Humming about our streets in far more numerous swarms than ever. We stumble at the old stone; burn our fingers in the former Flames; Run into the *Pest-houses* where we Caught our first plague sore; fall a stealing when the branding-Iron newly taken from our Hands: to Forgeries, so soon as Come down from the pillory. Our seeming sorrows of Repentance restrain not future viciousness; but we defile our selves with disclaimed Impurity; we lick up that we had disgorged; Soyl our skin in the old puddle; with the Dog return to the vomit, and with the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire; we come Canker'd Mettle out of the furnace, and Leprous out of *Jordan*. This Judgment being defeated; he then Reaches the Rod out of his own hand, into our Enemies. Such an infatuation falling on our *Senitors*, as they neglected those Counsels, obvious to the commonest person. His Providence as well as our carelessness, lets loose that *Belgick Lion* upon us, to enter into our very Entrails,

By the fire
in our
Harbour.

trials, and burn our strength in our own Harbor, Exposing our *Houses* to be made our *Shambles* or *Prisons*: pulling down those *Brazen walls* that for more than a hundred year rendred us terrible and impregnable to all nations round about us: which judgment, if mercy to a miracle prevent not, is like to prove but a prologue to a more fatal Tragedy. Thus ready to be straitned in all our Interests; scarce possible for us to flee any way but to himself; Imprisoned in our native Countrey, and Invironed round by Insulting foes, we were minded to surrender *our lusts* (which provoked him to make war upon us) and *our selves* to him, that we might gain a Title to *his Rescue* and *Deliverance*. We called our *Moses* to Improve their Interest; we let down our *Almes Basket* of repentance, looked out at our prison-grates, and cryed, *Lord remember the poor prisoners*: He pittied, and took compassion &c. and as he passed by, dropped in an *alms* of mercy and deliverance. When we stood upon the brink of destruction, and ripe for ruine; when vengeance even knocked at our door, and the sword at our breast, he held his hand, offered violence to his own justice, and called upon us, *Turn yee, turn yee, why will yee die!* He put us once more into the hands of our own counsel; set life and death, Blessing and Cursing before us, yet to chuse and make our own fortune. We cannot have forgotten the fears, losses, mischiefs, of our late war, especially that dread, consternation and shame we were affected with, when

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our enemies did distress us in our very gates: But neither did we set our hearts to this also; no sooner was the present smart and sting of that judgment abated, but we began to cast up new Trenches of security; to fortifie our old Lusts with thicker Rampants of a more Resolute impenitency; great Amazement, some Humiliation, but no amendment: we turn into a Temple, into a Clofset, into a Counsel Chamber, turn to devise new platforms, but not from our evil ways. We soon forgot the promises made in the day of our distress: our Devotion abated with our fears; and our piety ceased with his Rod: God no sooner held his hand, but we held our tongue: He forbore plaguing, and we forbore praying; and greedily again sucked in the poyson, we had only laid down while we were begging for our lives. We soon grow weary of our own rest, and make war upon our own peace, and become cruel to our own mercies. As if we were so inamored of destruction, when prevented of it from our Enemies abroad, we (by Duells and divisions) seek it from one another, and find or make Enemies at home: As if we thought publick peace intollerable, that when it is call upon us we are faine to take in private quarrels as our rescue from that dull quiet, and court the utmost mischiefs to avoid the oppression of the greatest happiness. That we might be prepared if attempted by others, we try and exercise the Acts of war (lest we forget them) on our selves; We dread the reproach of vain Impotent men,

yet confidently Incounter the anger of the omnipotent God. Thus perversely do we countertermine his purposes of kindness, and when he hath secured us, solicitously seek to be delivered from our safety; project new dangers, and dare his power with a yet harder Taske, the delivering us from our *selves* as well as our *Enemies*.

Thus *one Rod* swallowed up *another*: And the Lord hath come with fire and with his Chariots like a whirl-wind, to render his Anger with fury, and his Rebuke with flames of Fire; for by fire and by the sword hath he pleaded with us, and the slain of the Lord have been many (g). Nor hath he been silent by Extraordinary admonitions, *Blazing Stars*, and *prodigies in nature*, the usual *Tokens* and *Comminations* of his Anger, Trumpets and Instruments of judgment, Portenders, and Antecedents of mundane Catastrophes. He with whom it is free to do or forbear, usually thus shakes his *Rod* before he strikes a nation, threatens to try, and when iniquity abounds, by these fore-runners makes an *out-cry* to Alarum us by repentance to meet him; (so will avert the evil or provide it shall not be evil to us) who is marching on in fury after them; and that steps not out of his ordinary road, besides the order of nature, but for special ends and designs. To declare to the world they are insignificant, is to cast a vail upon the face of providence, to put out the eyes of most men living, and to raze the records of all past ages, and our

own experience, who have seen and felt their doubtful effects. (b) And although he hath not hitherto sent famine amongst us, yet this calls as loud because so deserved though at present not inflicted. He gives us bread, that we may live to see our selves miserable. Yea, there is much of famine in our very plenty; with our store of Corn, so great a nationall poverty if not occasioned by, accompanied with it, that he seems to have over-blest us with Abundance, and made us unhappy by his mercies; we want by having much, fulness of bread is our sin and punishment. Thus by all means manifesting himself, he hath not left himself without witness, but us without excuse, who resist all indearments, and by kindnesses will not be courted into *Amendment*; we even provoke the day of the Lord, and insult over his vengeance, and offend notwithstanding, nay the more for such terrible judgments, as appeale and strike us into terror and confusion: No *nation* was ever more signallized by Gods goodness, or its own perverseness. It being hard to determine, in which of these respects it is most eminent. But we still Affect *prodigies*, take a kind of wanton joy in defeating his designs; and as if we aspired to use miracles with him, have made our returns as unparralleled as his mercy; and would strive whether he should be first weary of *smiting*, or we of *Sinning*. We look up to *heaven* with as black Brows, and walk the Church with as Crooked feet as before. He that was filthy, is

filthy still. What Adulterer hath yet unclasped his hands with his curtezan? what drunkard hath drawn his lips from his intemperate cups? what proud person shifted himself from his fantastick garbs? what swearer latched his tongue, or miser opened his cofer? what man given to appetite hath put a knife to his Throat? or scoffer ceased to blaspheme? such as observe us, cannot conclude we are so modest as to stick at saying the worst we can think, or suppress any thing as too ill to be acted or spoken. And if our noon-day sinners be so unreformed; could we search the blind corners, pry what the ancients do in the dark, and look through the hole of the wall, what strange chambers of imaginary, and creeping things, and fourfooted beasts, might be there discerned (1); how many black-nighted birds appearing upon the walls? but what then is seen by the all-seeing eye? The Times, the face of things turn, there are several variations and changes in humane *affairs*, but not in humane *actions*, men are *resolved* upon their paths, *constant* in their extravagances; their necks are as Iron: They sweat and ride post in their waies, that an *Angel* with a naked sword in his hand can scarce make them give a check with the bridle; so degenerate we are, and habituated in vicious courses, that if *Enoch* again walked with God upon earth, he should scarce draw us to walk after him; was *Noah* to preach over his old notes, we would mock at him, rather than listen to him; not a man more

would

i. Ez. 8. 7.
 &c.

would be saved, but leave him to ship himself and family only in the *Ark*: was *Elijah* to prophesie to this age, himself might be carried up in a fiery charriot, but leave *Ahab* and *Azurish* to plagues and vengeance: were *Christ* once more to take flesh on him, he might sooner be led again to be crucified, than crucifie our unmortified lives: The most pervers *Jews*, obstinate *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, were never harder to be converted than we. *Vice* goes strutting to and fro our streets in its gaudy bravery, while despised *virtue* hangs her drooping head; as if to make an open shew of the spoils of goodness we lead our lusts in triumph, We ingrosse and set up a *Monopoly* of *vice*, and have made this land the *Casino* of the earth, the *stews* of the whole world; as if all *Miscreants* were here met as at a general *Randevouz*. How have the filthy *Dreams* and *Channels* of all nations round about us, emptied, and disgorged themselves in this common-shore of iniquity: we may here behold the old worlds oppression; the fulness of *Bread* and idleness of *Sodom*; the pride of *Jerusalem*; the drunkenness of *Holland*; the Vanity of *France*; the uncleanness of *Spain*; the Iron yoke of *Egypt*; the furnace of *Babylon*, &c. The land is covered with filth, and a dunghil lies at each man's door. We are building up to such a prodigious height, the confused *Babel* of our own sin and guilt, that we seem to threaten heaven it self, as if we meant to make war upon God to invade his territories, to pull him off his

Throne, and prescribe *Laws* to him for Agreement; our daring lusts bid bartel to all the Artillery of the almighty, meet him in his Loudest thunder, and venter on destruction in its dreadfulest form; we love our sins, even when they threaten us ruine; and serve them assiduously, while they promise no other wages but utter overthrow. Oh! what balm is there in *Gilead* for this wound? what *Jordan* to cleanse this leprocy? what can we preface from execrable courses but a desperate end? what do our monstrous impieties, but foretell prodigious punishments? that sin will at last rap us in her fatal rope. If nothing but bearing fruit will save this figtree that cumberes the ground, it is in great hazard to be cut down, and this kingdom in the broad way, the high road to destruction. There may be threshing mountains, beating hills as chaff, shattering gates of Brasse, cutting asunder Bars of Iron, giving people as dust to the sword and as driven stubble to the Spear, turning, Cities into a Heap, and *Eden* into a wilderness, sweeping away the valiant men, and causing the Carcasses of the dead to fall as the dung, throwing down golden Candlesticks, and bringing a famine both of bread and of the word upon a Nation, that hath been full fed with the ordinances; for there is no reformation to preserve a falling Church, to rescue a perishing Kingdom. We have all reason to expect God should exert his power as eminently against us, as he hath done for us, unlesse perhaps that he sees that is not necessary for
our

our ruine. For indeed let him but stand by, and not interpose his *Omnipotence* for us, he may trust us to be his *Executioners*, our *vices* having a *naturall*, as well as *morall* efficacy to destroy us; and. we have cause to fear that's the reason of his seeming connivance, that he forbears to strike us, to give us up to those more fatall wounds, we inflict on our selves. 'Tis not our *innocency* that gives us *impunity*, but (more than probable) our *incorrigiblenesse* that God gives us over, with a *Why should you be smitten any more?* will not prostitute his judgements; but as the basest of Malefactors, leaves us to the basest of Executioners, and let our iniquities become our ruine: the severest purpose God can entertain towards us, and to avert it our most important concern. And oh! that we who have so perversly resisted all the designs of his love, would now try to defeat that of his anger, rob him of those intestine avengers within our own breasts; (k) which not only provoke, but execute his wrath, and make us more miserable than Hell it self could do without them. 'Tis more than time for us to seek to escape from so formidable mischiefs; O let us not contract one minutes delay; let's cast our selves at the feet of our offended God, and beg that he will please to think us worthy his own correction; that whatsoever we suffer from his hand, we may not (like *Hirod*) be delivered up to the loathsome fortune of being devoured by our own putrification, but may fall into the hands

k 1 Pet. 2.
11.

hands of God, and not into the hands of men, at least, not of our selves, who are more to be dreaded than all our other enemies.

By the pa-
rable of a
Vineyard.
I Isa. 5. 1.
Ec.
Mar. 12. 1.
Ec.

Now will I sing to my well beloved, a song of my beloved touching his Vineyard; (1) [my beloved planted a Vineyard in a very fruitfull Hill] on which his paths dropt fatnesse. To secure it from invasion of Forraign Enemies, [he fenced it] with water. His Providence, and Protection encompassed about, and hemmed it in, as a garden enclosed, appointing Salvation for walls and bulwarks. It's *invincible strength* put despair into the fainting Hearts of Forraign Monarchs; all their rage unable to bring mischief upon it; [he gathered out the stones thereof] throwing out the Heathen (m) Idolaters, or whatsoever might prove snares; stumbling blocks to annoy, or hinder its fertill prosperity; delivered it from Hellish cursed conspiracies of trayterous Papists, (men of bloudy principles and practices, oh my soul, enter not thou into their secrets) and plucked it as a fire brand out of the fire. He [planted it with the choycest Vine] richest means, and such excellent ones (n) as he chose to be a speciall people unto him, above all upon the face of the earth, (o) and out of his speciall love gave them Kings for their nursing Fathers, and a Queen their nursing-mother. (p) To spy and see what returns it would make, and for its *Beauty and Strength* He [built a Tower] erected his worship [in the midst of it, (q) glving such frequent, plain, awakening

m Psal. 44.

2.

n Psal. 16.

3.

Oeu. 7. 6.

p Isa. 49.
23.

q Isa. 6. 27.
Mich. 4. 8.

awakening, vehement, alluring, passionate instructions, invitations, pleadings, admonitions, promises, threats, solicitations, expostulations, & warnings by his *watchmen*, that every one was ashamed not to owne *Religion*, or pretend *Ignorance* of his *duty*, or *despair* of his *reward*, or to want obligations to bring forth much fruit. To distill the spirituall juice of grace which chears God and man, [He hewed out a wine-presse in it] making our plagues wonderfull, and us a Theatre of his providences, mercies, judgements, and disquieting prodigies. His Heralds having worn and wearied themselves out of Breath, with crying, and displaying the Banner of Peace, he came himself in the fiercenesse of his wrath, with a flaming Sword in one hand, and a Besome of destruction in the other; and he put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and a Helmet of Salvation upon his head, the garment of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak (r): for he called for a *domestick Enemy* to be the Hammer wherewith he might break us, for a *Forraign nation* to be the arrows of his quiver wherewith he might cleave us, for *death* to be his syth to mow us down like grass, for the *fire* to be his glittering Sword wherewith he might terrifie and destroy us, plying us so close with his judgements that the Land it self *mourned* for her houses and inhabitants (s) who did not for themselves. And after so much cost, pains, and means, I might well [look that it should bring

r Isa. 59.
17

s Ho. 4. 3.

bring forth grapes;] for though none expect a
Vintage from a *wildernesse*, yet who plants a
 11 Cor. 9. *Vineyard* and eats not of the fruit thereof? (t)

7. or sowes wheat and reaps only Tares? the earth
 gives seed to the sower, the Harvest-man ga-
 thereth the corn, and reapeth the ears with
 his armes, the mower filleth his hand, and
 v Ps. 125. he that bindeth up sheaves his bosome: (v)

7. And in the nobler cultures of the mind, men
 justly expect of their Pupils that their *man-
 ners* attest the discipline they have been under;
 His *expectation* from it could not but be very
 high, there being no place under the Sun
 whom he hath more *signallized* as his own
 immediate care, on whom the Divine Oecono-
 my hath more constantly, and even solici-
 tously attended in all the variety of seaso-
 nable and powerfull applications; but such a
 strange unhappy propriety there was in the
 soil, that after all this culture, it produced
 nothing but [wild grapes;] answered all his care
 and kindnesse in husbanding it, with an un-
 godly prodigious wickednesse. The plenti-
 full Showers, and Sun-beams of his blessing,
 drew from them the more filthy stenchful lusts,
 and noysome vapors of their corrupt lives.
 The sweet dews of *Hermon*, made the Hill of
Sion fruitfull only in unfruitfull works: whe-
 ther God strike or stroak, the obstinate grow
 more rebellious, by correcting, and untoward
 by indulgence; they harden under the shine of
 his mercies, and hammering of his judge-
 ments; any wind will serve his turn that's
 sayling

sayling to the Land of darknesse. [And now
 Oh inhabitants of *London* and men of *England*]
 I summon you into the Court of Conscience,
 and arraign and plead against you, like a
 wronged plaintiffe at your own Bar. I im-
 pannel no *Jury*, but your *own consciences*, nor
 condemn you by any other *verdict*, but that out
 of your own mouths: Judge I pray you between
 me and my vineyard, to evince the equity of
 my proceedings; I refer the controverlie to a-
 ny rationall mans decision; I appeal to your
 own Testimony; be your selves Judges in
 your own case; tell me what your selves would
 do, if so served as I have been, or [what
 could have been done more for my Vineyard
 that I have not done:] Indeed God *can* do
 more than he *doth* or *will* do; he is not bound
 to do *all* he can, and if he did, he could not
 be *almighty*, but doth all in number weight
 and measure, as pleases him, and seems most
 agreeable to that infinite eternall wisdom that
 governs and regulates all his Actions. He can o-
 verturn the order of nature, enlighten the
 world without a Sun, and command corn to
 spring forth of the earth for the use of man,
 without plowing, sowing, Sun, or showers,
 with as much ease as he upholds second cau-
 ses in an ability to produce those effects; but
 he ordinarily *will not*; the established order of
 nature, is the orb wherein his power moves.
 He hath chosen and pitched on this way of
 governing and maintaining the world by the
 ministry and Agency of second causes, with-

Exod.
10. 3.
Mar. 8. 23.

Gen. 3. 5.
&c.

out which he seldom works, even miracles to give an allay to meer and pure omnipotency; (w) he carries on his work in a way of wisdom, tempers his omnipotency according to the nature and necessities of man; puts forth so much of an omnipotent power, as serves to bring about his own ends, and uses it in such a manner & not ordinarily to over-power his creature by irresistible force, nor shew any more of his omnipotency than the condition of man-kind requires. He had done all for it that he could suitable to the Law of Humane nature, wherein he hath established such a liberty of will, as is steered by the compasse of reason, managed by the force of morall Arguments and inducements; not hailing in chains of violence, or dragging forceably as slaves, but drawing by the *Bands of a man, and cords of Love*, he works in such a manner as is fit for reasonable souls, by overpowering our Judgements with such clear convictions of the beauty, excellencie, and necessity of Divine things, as may in a manner sweetly and gently ravish our wills into the embraces of them; not by any force of coercion, but of perswasion and conviction, and by the same principles in man that the devill did with his first temptation, self-love, and self-interest, a desire of preferment and bettering our condition. (x) *The grace of God was never intended to supersede but encourage mens endeavours; so that if we be not saved we may thank our selves; 'tis not because he doth not vouchsafe us a sufficiency*

ficiency of grace for that end, but because we abuse
 the liberty of our wills in hardening our selves
 against that grace that is tendered to us; boul-
 ting and fortifying our Hearts, & making them
 impregnable against all his assaults. He that
 shews a man that precipice upon whose brink
 he stands, that entreats, importunes, nay,
 bribes him with the greatest rewards, to re-
 tire from danger, and chuse safety, hath done
 all that can be expected from a friend, or cha-
 ritable man; and if after all, the wret-
 ched person so advised shall cast himself
 headlong upon ruine, no inquest surely would
 return his murder in any other form than *Fel-
 lo-de-se*. He had done so much for them as
 were proper, and abundantly sufficient to
 have wrought repentance in the most obsti-
 nate; but yet successe and efficacy answered
 not the sufficiency and probability of the means.
 Now hear O *House of England*, are not my
 wayes equall? are not your ways unequal? (y)
 Have not I wooed thee with tears of love?
 wrestled by my Ambassadors? trained thee up
 in the school of my providences? sent thee to
 it with a rod at thy back, a Garland over thy
 Head; using there all means to learn thee
 righteousness; trying smiles and frowns,
 courting with all the Arguments drawn from
 the topicks of promises, and threatnings,
 judgements, and mercies; waiting with unwearied
 patience all the day long have I stretched forth
 my hands unto a rebellious and gainsaying peo-
 ple (z) And if the day be not long enough,

y Ezek. 18.
 25.

z Rom. 10.
 21.

I have

^a Can. 5. 2.

I have stood till my head hath been filled with Dew, and my Locks with the drops of the night. (^a) How many plaiters have been laid upon our sores, yet the Ulcer as bad as ever? How many Ministers Heart-strings have been broken, and sent into their graves with our impenitency, to afflict their dying spirits? We weary God with expectation; the eye of Heaven akes to see this nation humbled. We hear many clocks strike, yet do not believe that the hour is yet come that we should fall to our work. All the *Watchmen* upon the walls cannot give us warning. All the clouds of Heaven gathered together, cannot water our dry consciences. All the Hammers of the Temple striking in their order, cannot break our stony-Hearts. The whole Colledge of Physicians cannot cure us: Myriads of Preachers, that have been in this Nation have not been able yet to convert us. We come away dry from the purest springs; poor from the richest Mines, unregenerate from the most soullaving Fathers. If the presence of one Minister contemn'd will make men one day know and feel that there hath been a Prophet among them; (^b) what a judgement doth this Nation ly under, for vilify- and nullifying so many seraphicall Sermons: Whole *Nineveh* turn penitent by one *Jonah*, and the cry of one days journey, but the zeal of many Teachers, and Gods patience for many years, leave us impenitent. [And now go too, I will tell you what I will do to my vine-yard]

^b Ex: k. 3. 5.

yard] seeing it hath defeated all my attempts of mercy, vanquished all the stratagems of my love, frustrated all my expectations, [I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up, & I will break down the walls thereof, & it shall be troden down,] and destroyed by Hostile invasion; for I will leave off to help, succour, and defend it, and lay it open to the rage, and fury of its enemies; so that all that passe by the way shall pluck it, the Boare out of the wood shall wast it, and the wild beast of the field devour it (c): [And I will lay it wast] turning it from a Vineyard into a desert, without any inhabitants: [It shall not be pruned, nor digged,] seeing my former husbanding it was but lost labor, and cost cast away, I will hold my Hand; and [there shall come up briars and thorns;] It shall be overgrown with Idolatry, superstition, errors, abominations, and such noxious weeds. Its very root also shall wither; it shall be no more comforted and refreshed by my Ministers, whose Doctrine used to drop and distill on it as the Dew; for [I will command the Clouds that they raine no more upon it:] Howl for her, take Balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed; we would have healed her, but she is not healed; Forsake her, and let us go every one to his own place, for her judgement reacheth unto Heaven, and is lifted up even unto the skies: (d) Gods promise of cohabiting and residence is limited to those who own themselves his people; therefore, when so many of

• Ps. 30. 19.

d Je. 51. 9.

us have openly renounced that relation we cannot justly expect the blessing appendant to it, that he should longer reside among those, who so avowedly disclaim him. And though this seem to some no formidable thing; God's withdrawing himself, is but agreeable to their wishes, a kind of quitting the field to them, and so rather matter of *complacency* than *regret*; but there's another *presence* of God that will infallibly succeed this: When he removes that of his *grace*, 'tis to make way for that of his *anger*, and we shall know the God of *Israel* is among us by his *plagues*; (e) And like the damned in Hell, discern his *presence* only in the *punitive* effects of it, and read his nearness in our sufferings. And those that have most despised or loathed the soft breathings of his word and spirit, shall find it yet harder to endure the whirlwinds of his wrath, which will snatch from us those secular advantages, for whose pursuit we have neglected the better part; (f) And leave us as little of worldly enjoyments, as we desired to have of spiritual. [For the Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, is the house of *England*, and the men of *London* his pleasant plant. And he looked for judgement, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry] nothing but fraud, and force; pinching, and biting; supplanting, and circumventing; prosecuting, and persecuting; glossing, and varnishing; suffocating, and adulterating; lengthning, and spinning out suites and quarrels; dread-
full

e 1 Sam. 5.

f Lu. 10. 42.

full decrees in the Court of Conscience, and horrid orders in the Courts of Justice; as if oppression and tyranny were a trade, and the Poets *Iron-age*, a type of *ours*. O where shall the wronged seek for relief, or the innocent find a bar of Justice? 'twould perplex one to think how many writs are fil'd, records entred, bills preferred, Judgments and executions passed; how many regiments there are of Serjeants, and Bayliffs, how many brigades of Attornies, and Counsellors in this little Kingdom? were not violence predominant, what need there be called in so many necessary Agents to restrain it? were not the house ruinous, what need of so many Master-workmen to repair it? O! when will the whip depart out of the Kingdom? when will the wild beasts teeth fall out of their heads? when will the hammers leave beating? when will the Millstones leave grinding? when will repentance so reduce us to equity, that there need neither Tribunall to rectifie injuries, nor Pulpit to touch consciences for extortion? How can a man desire God to remove Judgements, when he removes Land-marks? or to cast away his rod, when himself chastises with Scorpions? or to have a taste of free mercy, when he eats the bread of others without money? shall he repent with his Bears teeth in his head? or his Lions skin upon his back? 'Tis in vain to sigh for compassion, where the sighs of the poor cry for vengeance; or think to pacifie God, till he hath

pacified the world; or to look up to Heaven
 for pardon, till cured of his blood-shotten
 eyes, or to strike his hands for mercy, till he
 hath quit them of violence. 'Tis much men
 can take their nights rest, for they lay them-
 selves down upon clothes layd to pledges; (*g*)
 or joy in their dwellings, for their stones
 are hewen out of a rough quarrey; their hou-
 ses are built by unrighteousnesse, and their
 chambers by wrong; (*h*) or that they can
 walk the streets, the cryes of the oppressed
 are so shrill against them, that they can eat
 their meat, when they find so much strange
 flesh in the Caldron, or comfortably enjoy
 enjoy their estates, when they know by what
 an *Abab's* evidence they hold the Vineyard;
 that they can make their *wills*, when they feel
 on their death-beds, they are but to give away
 ill gotten goods: for legacies. O how many
 seek places to suck the veins of the people?
 buy Offices, to shark upon the Nation? Turn
 Informers, Promoters, waiters, searchers, not
 to discover, but to distill; not to punish, but
 to prey upon errors? so many wild beasts,
 and ravenous Serpents rang, that one would
 think this Land were the Forrest of Tygers,
 and dragons: Men enjoying *preys* with as
 much inward satisfaction as *Birib-rights*, and
 possessing *rifles* with as quiet a conscience as
just earnings. Digging of pits, taking up all
 with the angle, swallowing people alive as
 the grave, enjoying fruit without money,
 breaking the arms of the Fatherless, afflict-
 ing Gods heritage. *Aegypt's* Iron furnace is e-

ven amongst us. How many roaring Lyons, and Wolves of the evening, devouring with such fury, that they leave not the bones till the morrow? Some with *Felix* griping for bribes; others with *Naash* require mens right eyes to condescend to a peace; some with *Jezabell's Judges* pronouncing sentence of death upon a framed information; others running greedily after the error of *Balam* for reward: Should men demand according to Gods Law (i) Ex. 21. 24. hand for hand, what a *dismembred Nation* would there be? how many houses and estates are built with crying stones? Cemented with bloody mortar? Grounselled with damages? Roofed with detriments? Plastered with the brains of widdows? Hung with the skins of Orphans? that keep a shambles of butchers meat, & have their caldrons boiling with the limbs and quarters of the poor, chopt in pieces with their cleavers? people generally will scarce take notice of their cruelty, or feel their *rough hands*, much lesse take away the *crimes*, or turn from the violence of their hands: Instead of emptying their houses of preys, cleansing their estates from injustice, and casting away their ill-gotten goods over their neighbours thresholds, they will finger more, snatch at the rest, and make a perfect rife of the remainder. Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee, and divided thee thine

1 Deu. 32.
6. &c.
Psa. 78. 53.

inheritance? Remember the daies of old, concerning the years of many generations: Ask thy elders, and they shall tell thee what deliverances he hath wrought for thee; and how he kept thee as the apple of his eye; and was thy rock and mighty deliverer, when the Sea overwhelmed thy enemies; Heaven even bowed down unto thee, and under its protection thou wentest as under a canopy of State; He made thee to ride on the high places of the earth, that thou mightest eat the increase of the field; the fat of lambs; and of the kidneys of wheat, and of a land flowing with milk and honey; and thou didst eat the pure blood of the grape. (k) But thou forlookst God that made thee, and lightly esteemedst the rock of thy salvation. Oh unkind people! were it a nation I had not been acquainted with, had it been an enemy, I could have born the affronts you put upon me; but, what you my *familiar*? what thou my *son*? is this thy kindness to thy friend? hast thou no bowels to spurn against, but *his* that yearns in compassion; no breasts to shoot at but *his* that burns in affection towards thee? Art thou resolved to make God to serve with thy sins? His providence to be a purveyor to thy Lusts? a Chamber-maid to thy pride? a Cupbearer to thy intemperance? a Groom to thy luxurious desires? and divine patience to Lacque it, to run still at thy heels? to be a sinning stock, a pack horse for impenitent soules: loading, and forcing him

him to cry out, *Ab!* I will ease me of mine adversaries? will you extract the rankest poyson from the most soveraign cordiall? and kindle hell out of a sparke of heaven? will you nurse the brats of your lusts, at the breasts of divine bounty? while he is smiling upon you, spit in his face? and be sticking daggers in his heart, while opened to let you in? do you spend the time of your reprieve, in plotting treason against your soveraign, in forging weapons against him, who stands becomming to you at the gate of his promises? why throw you the plaster the phylician offers, in his face? and fling out of the armes of mercy? scorning, trampling her invitations under foot, that sets out, pursues, and overtakes you, spreads all her treasures at your feet, and on her knees intreats you to return and live? do you *nauseate* your present state? and desire a change? are you satiated with comforts? and sick of happiness? do you loath *manshab*, and grow weary of your *welfare*? have you dwelt too long in *Canaan*, that you know not the worth of a land of promise? do you all you can to grieve providence? and to exasperate a blessing God, to make gaps in your own hedge? to pluck down the sticks of your own nest? to drive him away from watching over you? and force him that hath thus long dwelt among you, to turn his back upon you, and to leave your coast with distast and displeasure? and invite in, the destroyer? Is this the way to preserve blessings, or to waist them? and to compel those mercies to forsake you, that you would be glad with

2 Joh. 14. 6.

Act. 4. 22.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

wringing hands, to recall and regain wretches, I might have shut you up in the dungeon of desperation, with the silly heathens grooping in darkness, without the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes unto me, but by him, neither is their salvation in any other (1): How be it I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; so famous that you might well question whether you had *Angells*, or *men* to preach unto you, and more truly say, than the people of *Lystra*, that *God was come down unto you in the likeness of men*: Here one speaks like an *orator*, there another like a *Logician*; Here one by rhetorick endeavours to charme and perswade, there another, by reason to convince; here one shewes an Almighty arme to save, there another his hand to reveng; here one comes with teares and terrours, there another with tokens of love and kindness; here one offers an *arke* to such as desire salvation, there another raines down *floods* of curses upon refusers of it: These lights spend their own oyle to light you to Heaven; and like silk-wormes spin out their own bowels to cloath you with the garment of Righteousness; and loe they are unto you; but as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for you hear my words, but you will not do them: You were still talking against them by the walls, and in the dores of the Houses; and spake one to another saying, come I pray you and hear, what will this Babler say? you were readier to lay a snare for

for him that reproveth in the gate (*m*) than to doubt of any snare coming upon your selves. m 1f. 29. 22
 Princes write such crimes, as contempt and abuse of their ambassadours; in the blood of the guilty, unless where an arm of power is wanting to weild the sword of justice, because it reflects on him that sends them (*n*); *Jerusalem* ston'd the prophets so long, till she had not one stone left upon another; they mocked the messengers of God, and misused his prophets, till there was no remedy; and when this cometh to pass, (so it will come) then shall you know that a prophet hath been among you (*o*): wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the Towns of England, and in the streets of London, and they are wasted and desolate as at this day: for I sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt; your young men have I slain with the sword; I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as firebrands pluckt out the burning, yet have you not returned unto me saith the Lord; (*p*) you p Am. 4. 10
 make a mock at Heaven, and slight, and contempt that power that strikes you, by continuing in sin under Judgment; and put the greatest affront and indignity upon God, and all his attributes: carrying his *Judgments* in triumph, and hauling them at the chariot-wheels of your *Impenitency*; you proclaim to all the world, you have conquered the Lord of Host, defeated his power, vanquish't his vengeance, stood out the seige and thock of his omnipotent fury, daring Hea-

Lu. 10.

Ex. 33. 30.
&c.

11.

ven to do its worst upon you, and charge thorow whole Squadrons and troops of divine threatnings and Judgments; telling him you are resolved to shelter his enemy, to interpose your own breasts as shields between his sword and your lusts, and to make your houses and hearts their sanctuary and refuge, mauger all his revenges? O desperate soules! do you provoke the Lord to Jealousie? are you stronger than he? do you sling down the gantlet to omnipotency? and challenge him into the field, that can easily vindicate himself in your confusion? against whom no rebellion can be longer prosperous than he willingly permits? Come sinner, gird up now thy Loynes like a man, for I will demand of thee in Gods name, and answer thou me (q): Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds? or hast thou an arm as long as Gods? art thou able to wrest the sword out of his hands? and make infinite vengeance fly before thee? canst thou stand the shock of his fury, and bandy back his thunder-bolts? and incounter the violent torrent of his indignation? O prodigious folly! to contend with one that can look thee into attomes, beckon thee into ruine, wink thee into nothing, point thee into destruction, and kill thee with a single frown. Tis your sins have made havock of the church and state. The security and Licentiousness of your prosperous dayes, made the first breach in your walls; and now your impenitency, profaness, incorrigibleness, cry, *down with them, down with them even to the ground.* Will you be so cruel to your selves,

as by your persevering Impieties to smite and destroy those feeble and faint remains of your former Felicities? and not only curse, but destroy your common mother and native country, to abet and maintain those troops that desie and invade them? O! why should you not at last recall your exil'd piety, and assume a holy and becoming indignation against those your cruel and implacable enemies? Know you not that England is destroy'd? Are not your estates wasted? your splendor eclipsed? your families broken and scattered? your dignities trampled on? And is it not time to dismiss the author of all, *your sins*? which are also not your *slaves*, but *task-masters*, that set you to the most servile, vilest drudgery; and are so far from bringing you in profit, (r) that the only account, you can Ro. 6. 21. bring in of your harvest, is but the inventory of your miseries? many houses and temples they have layd wast and demollisht, but you have no *structures of stony* to shew, but a *Babell* of confusion. Would you yet fain feel the weight of an Almighty arm? and force him to pour forth Judgment without mercy? may it not suffice to have sinn'd away your plenty? and so many thousand soules, and such a city into their graves? no sooner is one plague removed, but do you lay hands upon Heaven, by the mighty cart-ropes of your iniquities, to pull another down on your own head? Must you yet stir up a consuming fire? have you not drunk deep enough already? do you long to see the bowl going round again? and to kindle the oyl of

of mercy, and the heat of wronged love into everlasting flames? Are you resolved to try what Omnipotency can bring upon you, how far divine vengeance will pursue you, how low it is to the bottome of misery? what! call you for more plagues, and direfull curses? do you cry out for the sharpe scourge to sting your backs? and the cup of astonishment to be thrust to your lips? that the line of confusion might be drawn over all your cities? and the stones of emptiness might be found in your streets? that you might be made as *Admah*, and set as *Zeboim*? that head and tail branch and rush might be cut off in one day? that there might be none but wild beasts in stead of living men to inhabit them? a possession for the bittern, screech-owle, *Zijms*, and *Sijns*? that you might be smitt till none remain? that your land might be blotted out from under Heaven? that not a Town, pallace, or ruin of a porch, might be seen? but breeding of salt-pits, nettles, and a perpetual desolation? that your city might be made a heap, a burying place, a dunghill, a shambles? that the day of our slaughter and dispersions might be accomplished? Ah sinners! are these your bloody designs, and endeavours? the *Kingdom* might stand long enough, if you weaken not its foundations: *If it fall, we know whose hands to charge for pulling it down*; not the hands of justice, but of your own *Transgressions*: 'tis they that plot treachery, and combine to work your ruine; that open your gates; that call in Judgments to slaughter on the right hand and on the left; yea so enrage them,

them, that they will not leave wasting, till made you utterly desolate. O England, thou hast destroy'd thy self; methinks I see you bringing pick-axes to dig down your own walls, springing mines to blow up your own houses, kindling sparkes that will set all in a flame, barring up your Havens, unrigging your ships, building block-houses against your selves: Therefore now, thus saith the Lord, wherefore commit you this great evill against your soules, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling out of *England*, to leave you none to remain; in that you provoke me to wrath with the works of your hands; that you might cut your selves off, & that you might be a curse, & a reproach among all the nations of the earth (1). And yet, as if he only spake big words, & all his threatenings were but meer bravado's of Heaven; you slight & contemn both his golden scepter, and his Iron rod: you laugh at the shaking of his spear, & account his darts as stubble; you mock at fear, & at the alarum of war cry, ha, ha (1). What, will you not turn to that great Sovereign, who hath invited you by more than six score thousand warnings, which cannot discern between pity and forgiveness, and also much forbearance? were ever people so prodigiously besotted, as to think God will see himself thus infinitely provoked? out-brav'd and defeated by a handfull of dult and confronted by a skin-full of worms-meat? As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of a *sinner*, much less of a *people*: Wherefore turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye dye? (2) Can you tell why or wherefore?

what

1 Jer. 44. 7. 2

1 Job. 89. 25.

2 Ez. 18. 31 & 33. 11

what people ever perished being innocent, or where were a righteous nation cut off? or who hath harden'd himself against him and prospered? But go ye now unto my place which is in *Shiloh*, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the iniquity of my people

• Je. 7. 12. *Israhel* (w). When *Pharaohs* throne confronted Heaven, saying, who is the Lord? God cloaths him with darkness, to convince him of his blindness; turns his waters into blood, to mind him of his oppression; pours in armies of vermin to mock his numbers, death to destroy them; and when he still drives on furiously in his sins, takes of the chariot wheels, and stops both them and him together. *Belshazar* while securely carousing between the cup and the lip is surpriz'd with a hand on the wall, that shook him and his Kingdom into a convulsion. *Nebuchadnezzar* while boasting of the *Babell* he had built, by the greatness of his power, and for the Honour of his majesty, is forc't to lay down that and his humanity together, sent to graze in the field amongst beasts, and condemned for derogating from the power of Heaven, to have too much of its influence; To speak of more the time would fail; and will you dance upon the brink of ruine? and rock your selves asleep in the cradle of security, while the hasty tide of divine vengeance is flowing towards you? Ask *Atbent*, *Sparta*, *Babylon*, *Ninveh*, *Carthage*, *Sodom*, *Gomorah*, *Jerico*, *Corinth*, *Galathia*, *Philippi*, *Ephesus*, *Smyrna*, *Nice*, *Laodicea*, *Antioch*, *Constantinople*, *Tyre*. Yea all the Eastern and African Churches,

Churches (who have no other defence, but paper walls, to keep their memories, and are set up, as night-lights to warn all, of those rocks and Quick-sands that ruined and destroyed them) whether sin doth not ring your funeral knell in their ruines; you may find enough treasure there, if well imploy'd, to redeem you out of present hazard, and future miseries. Oh the tender mercy's of our God! should he take our first refusall, and write every breach of his law in the blood of his subjects; should we bear no more from him upon our refusing his first call; and go away when we thrust him away, who then could be saved? but he pittys our weakness, over looks our infirmities, provides for our necessities, encourages our frail endeavours, accepts of our sincerity, and remembers we are but dust. He doth not examine by scourging (x), nor (as Zedekiah did Micaiah) strike, and speak after. He lyes not at ketch to trappan us into ruin; nor suddenly stirs up all his wrath; or immediately hurries from sentence to execution; he tries, *many hours Belshazzar*, (y) ^{2 Ag. 22. 24.} and the *Rich fool* (z) *forty days* the men of *Nineveh*: *three years* the fruitless figtree; *forty years* ^{20. Luk. 12.} *Jerusalem*, and the people of *Israel*; *a hundred and twenty* the old world; *four hundred* the *Amorites*: And though we can pluck down *20 houses* in less time than we can build *one*, God was but *6 days* in making the *world*, and yet seven in destroying *one city*; longer in razing the walls of *Jerico*, than in raising the fabrick of *heaven and earth*. He stoops to court the sinner to his

his own happiness; rifles the creation for arguments; and wrestles with him only that he would accept a blessing; gives us good examples, burning and shining lights; that he may thereby discover our deformity, and kindle our devotion; overthrows them on whom the Tower of *Siloam* fell, that being dead, may yet speak in its Ruines; mingles others blood with their sacrifices, that by a coal from their Altar, we may purge away our iniquities, or copy out our ruine; gives us the fatnesse of the earth, that we may purchase the dew of Heaven; the upper and nether springs to quench our thirst, to mind us of the Fountain of living water; sends *Nineveh* a Preacher to forewarn them of their destruction, furnished not only with arguments from their condition, but an experiment of his own, able to convince them, both by the vengeance he denounced, and the punishment he had suffered: forbore the old world all the while the arke was preparing, which had they well considered the design of it, though it saved but *eight*, might have preserv'd them all. He hangs out articles of agreement, before his black ensigns of death: warnes, and whets his sword (*a*), before he smites, and lays the *axe* at the root of the tree, ere he take it into his *band*, to hew down, and cast into the fire. Even the last day's tempest, is conspicuous in the black cloud of the threatening. If he use *mariall Law*, and hasten on to final execution, he steps out of the common road of justice; when he executes *that*,

is

is said to come out of his place, (b). puts himself out of his usual pasture, and forsakes his center as't were, when he rises out of his mercy seat, to punish the inhabitants of the earth. His mercy is over all his works, he prefers it, and gives it a place above them; and exercises it, though with some present disadvantage to his glory; the world suspects his being, the saints quarrel with his justice, and question his love (c): When *Jonah* had done his errand, free-grace seemingly made him a lyer (d). Judgements are the reserve, which he will not have fall on, till mercy is defeated, as all other means prove unsuccessful, to revenge the quarrel of his abused darling attribute. He admonishes, chides, expostulates, threatens. How many pauses doth he make, ere he take the rod in hand, and send us to his house of correction, and then, how leisurely doth he lift it up; he will not lash, not lay it on, if shaking it over us will amend and bring us on our knees: nor punish till there be no remedy. How many warning-peices doth he shoot against us, ere he shoot off his murdering-peice? Justice goes a foot's pace (e); mercy hath wings (f); he waits that he may be gracious: instead of bringing in an extinguisher, he lights up a candle (g). In encountering a rebellious people, he sends forth smaller party's of Judgments, to prevent a more solemn ruin; if they be vanquish'd, he rallies into battle array a whole army of Judgments to root out and destroy (h). He would fain have us reform, not at so dear a rate; chops, prunes, lops, before he lay the axe to the root of the tree: Lighter

b If. 26. 21.

c Ps. 7.

d Jon. 4. 2.

e Gen. 12.

21.

f Ps. 57. 1.

g Ps. 118. 28.

h Lev. 26.

Evills are sent before, that if they dispatch their errand, their whole army yet behind, may be disbanded or turned another way. Would words work us to his will, hee'd spare his blowes; would launcing heal the wound, hee'd not chop off the head. He *threatens*, that he may not punish; afflicts, that he may not *destroy*; and when determin'd to *cut off* a people, he knows not how to sign the warrant for execution, while mercy stands up, pleading their cause. It fetches tears from his eyes, to give way to justice, before he shed the blood of his enemies (*i*): He doth but shake the candlestick, to settle it; his hand trembles, when he must remove; and when he sees we will not be ordered, he breakes out into a deep sigh, with an, O that my people would have hearkned unto me, and Israel walked in my ways, &c. (*k*). No nation is the root that bears *mercy*, but 'tis that bears up all humane conditions, which hangs like a ball in the air, supported by infinite kindness. It is the great miracle we are preserved, not that we are in distresse, being so apt to danger that we are crushed before the moth, so worthless, that we perish by multitudes, without any regarding it; so guilty, that all creatures in heaven and earth give their applause to *divine Judgments* upon us; which are unwilling to proceed, till the stones cry out of the wall, and the beams out of the timber answer it (*l*): till the most insensible things, are ready to joyn with, and even provoke them up. Indeed, 'tis inconsistent with those methods and contrivances he sets on
foot

i Ho. 11. 8.

Lu. 19. 41.

k ps. 81. 33

&c.

l Hab. 2. 11.

foot for making us happy, to circumvent his creatures, with ambushes of unwarned judgments; or execute his revenge, by sly unexpected stratagems. He makes not the sword the judge, but first weighs things in the ballance; and ever layes judgment to the line, before he draws the line of confusion. But, though God be long suffering, he doth not tell us how long: Though infinite mercy will not be conquered, nor endless goodness admit of bounds, and mercy rejoyces against judgment (*m*); yet he doth not *forget*, though he *stay* m Ja. 2. 13. long: and the longer he forbears the interest, the greater sum, the principall of his vengeance will amount to. He is *Just*, as well as *gracious*: his *truth* obliges him to *make good* his *threatnings* against an unreforming people, and not to alter the word that is gone out of his lips. Sin may cry so loud, as to fetch him down with a vengeance (*n*); and be so importunate, as n Ge. 18. 20 &c. it seemes to say to the just judg, aveng thee of thine adversary; I will not leave, nor let thee go, untill thou hast punished this people, and quenched the fire of sin, with a shower of blood. For, so *states* are dashed in peices like a potters vessell, and kingdomes translated from one people to another. Whosoever harbours sin, is still unfortunate. A land spew's out its polluted inhabitants, when they have filled up the measure of their sins: put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, come get you down, for the press is full, the fatts over-flow, for their wickedness is great (*o*). Lo, he hath come year after o Ge. 15. 16

Lev. 26. 38.
Jer. 51. 13.
Job. 2. 12.
Zec. 5. 17.
&c.
Ez. 34. 25.
Mat. 23. 27.
1 Th. 2. 16.

Year, with patience seeking fruits, but found none, yet while the axe of his justice was at cutting down such cumberers of the ground, mercy interposed, *Lord let it alone this year also.* And when his hand hath been stretched out to strike, his dear children clunge about, ketched hold, and would not let him go; so that he could not sling them off, till weary of repenting. Now after his yearly drawing nearer and nearer, to bewail our sin and forwarn our ruine, my heart trembles, lest I behold him in a relenting posture of humane despair, and like one with blubbered eyes, smiting his breast, tearing his garments, standing in funerall weeds, over his languishing, dying patient; (with whom no meanes are left unattempted, but now finding her marked with the tokens of stupidity and death, giving her over for lost) to take his *finall solemne farewell*, expressing his sad Resentment, and compassionate relenting thoughts, weeping out the fatall period of an obstinate, incorrigible, self destroying people, saying, O my people! what have I done unto you, wherein have I wearied you? what fault can you find with me? testifie against me. Have I been a barren wilderness, or a land of darkness unto you? of dread, or of the shadow of death? what iniquity have you found in me, that you are gone far from me? How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not (p). O [if thou] that art the wonder of the world, the holy and honourable nation, the

delight of Heaven, the desire of the whole earth
[even thou] that hast on thee such peculiar
obligations, for whom I have had so much
kindness, to whom I have sent so many Mes-
sengers, for whose sake I have rebuked so ma-
ny people, of whom I have taken so much
care, to whom I have preached so many
sermons, among whom I have wrought so ma-
ny wonders, from whom I have received so
many affronts and injuries, with whom I have
been at so much cost and paines, and so long
gone about doing thee good, teaching thee by
my word, loading thee with my benefits (at
least in this thy day) and happy season, while
the treaty of peace, and offers of mercy are yet
on foot, while the silver trumpets of Heaven
and watch-men of Israel, rack and stretch their
voices with ruefull elogies, so passionate, as
might wring a stream of tears, from an heart of
Iron. Even after thy so rudely treating my
former messengers, killing so many prophets,
openly, scornfully rejecting me their Lord,
I yet made a pause, stood still, knockt, called,
looked back; thought I, well, I'll stay a little
longer, peradventure this sleeping church may
yet awake: O that there were such a heart in
them, that it might be well with them; O that
they would yet take up the controversie; that
I might put up my sword into the scabbard, and
my arrowes into my quiver; run ye to and fro
through the streets of London, and see now, and
know, and seek in the broad paths of England if
you can find a man (q) that taketh hold of my ^{4. 5. 1.}
strength,

strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me. Will none plead for a reprieve? Will none interpose for pardon? Will none mediate for reconciliation? O my bowells, my bowells, must I lose my dear son? Must I leave off my pleasant child; what shall I do unto thee? Which way shall I heal thee? How shall I part with thee? What more can I do for thee? Is all in vain I have done to thee? will nothing prevail with thee? must I now quite destroy thee? O *London!* what shall I do unto thee? O *England!* what shall I do unto thee? how shall I give thee up *London?* how shall I deliver thee *England?* how shall I make thee as *Admah?* how shall I set thee as *Zebaim?* mine heart is turned within me, my Bowells are kindled together. O if at length thou [hadst known the things that belong unto thy peace] and wisely improved the advantages, that might have settled thee on lasting foundations! But it's too late [now they are hid from thine eyes] The glasse of divine patience is run out. Thy rocky heart hath barred up the door of mercy; *Ordinances, Providences*, let her alone, to sleep on now. Though heaven thunder above, hell flame beneath, judgments roar round about, they shall but Lull her into a senseless slumber, till destruction wake her; for the day shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a Trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in, on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children with-

in

*Luk. 19. 14.
&c.*

in thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another [Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation] (r) Thou misimprovedst thy day of Grace and space of *repentance*. O *Repentance*! Thou joy of Angels, thou glory of man, thou Crown of nations, thou Clarifier of hearts, thou refiner of lives, thou great Almoner of the world, thou nurse of orphans, thou patron of all goodness. O *Repentance*! that art able to transnature, and translate a people, to puritie them in life, and pacifie them in death, and justifie them at the Throne; that canst unlock the gates of heaven, put the triumphant palm in the hand, & set the Crown of immortal glory upon the head; that saved 8 persons in the flood, A family at the destruction of *Sodom*, a mighty nation at the slaughter in *Egypt*, a great City, when after a thousand years Triumphant state, she had but 40. days respite to repent or be destroyed; *Nineveh* had fallen, if thou hadst not supported it, and perished, if thou hadst not protected it; 'Tis thou that wert her cure and covert, her shadow and shelter, her buttress and buckler, her breast-plate and head-piece, her shield and custos, her target and propitiatory; 'Tis thou that taughtest her the art & mystery how to prevent an eminent danger, to preserve her self at an exigence; that she stood still upon her old basis, when her ground was sliding and Cracking in peices; That her fabrick remained firme, when the whole structure was dropping down, and not one stone

ready to be left upon another. O *Repentance!* how hast thou saved a flourishing City? kept every pillar unshaken, every limb unshivered, ratified their liberties, confirmed their immunities, renewed their charter, continued them proprietaries in all their fees, Lords of all their Royalties, secured their authority and Jurisdiction, opulency and Affluency, Celsitude & sublimity, power and pomp, principality and preheminance, procerage and peerage, crown and crown-land: 'Tis thou that heldst the crown upon the Kings head, preservedst the Nobles in their court Equipage, the Merchants in their splendid traffique, pallaces, and banquetting houses, statues and sepulchers, Exchequers and wardropes, Coverts and arsenals, magazens and records, Laws and lives, by thee were safe; not a tree blasted, not a stone cast down, not an Image defaced, not a creature destroyed, not the least damage or detriment sustained; vengeance took not from them a shoo-latchet. O *Repentance!* how may we honor thy succouring bowels? and kiss thy securing hand? O great is thy potency, yea, a kind of omnipotency is bestowed upon thee, to rescue a people from greatest flatteries; O *Repentance!* In the crowd of our scuttles and contentions, whither art thou escaped? A midst our could entertainment into what quarter art thou stolen? which way art thou gone? to what region art thou fled? in what unknown country dost thou reside? tell us, that we may go and seek thee. O all hail *Repentance!*

Turn

Turn in unto us, be thou visible in this nation, that art able to repair the mischiefs, recall the vital spirits, reunite the scattered limbs of this mangled body, and in thee such an omnipotency as to effect a resurrection; weep so long over its ashes, till that moysture hath rendered them prolificall, and thou see it spring out of its urn; prepare us such a mercy-seat for God to appear upon within our walls. Let us be *Ninevites*, till thou canst make us the *new Jerusalem*; open our *Ears* to listen to our *prophets*, that we may not *have* the *Thunder* of a confounding God; lend us faith, that we may believe God, that trembling at his threatnings, we may not feel the *Terrors* of a perishing decree executed; cloath us in sack-cloth, that we may not be stript of our gorgeous rayment, sprinkle us with ashes, that the smell of fire may no more be felt within our walls; Enjoyn us to fast, that we may ere long be set down again at our spread tables; make us cry mightily, that no other cry may be heard in the *City*, but those of devotion; turn us from our evil ways, and from the violence of our hands, that they may not expose us to all manner of evils and the violence of Incensed justice; that thou mayest be as *Exemplary* as our crimes are *Exorbitant*. Whither can we go, O miserable people, but unto God? when we are in *sickness*, whither can we fly, but unto the *fountain of health*? when in *want*, whither but unto that *treasury of fulness*? when humane strength fails, whither can we go, but to om-

ready to be left upon another. O *Repentance!* how hast thou saved a flourishing City? kept every pillar unshaken, every limb unshivered, ratified their liberties, confirmed their immunities, renewed their charter, continued them proprietaries in all their fees, Lords of all their Royalties, secured their authority and Jurisdiction, opulency and Affluency, Celsitude & sublimity, power and pomp, principality and preheminance, procerage and peerage, crown and crown-land: 'Tis thou that heldst the crown upon the Kings head, preservedst the Nobles in their court Equipage, the Merchants in their splendid traffiques, pallaces, and banquetting houses, statues and sepulchers, Exchequers and wardropes, Coverts and arsenals, magazens, and records, Laws and lives, by thee were safe, not a tree blasted, not a stone cast down, not an Image defaced, not a creature destroyed, not the least damage or detriment sustained; vengeance took not from them a shoo-latchet. O *Repentance!* how may we honor thy succouring bowels? and kiss thy securing hand? O great is thy potency, yea, a kind of omnipotency is bestowed upon thee, to rescue a people from greatest flatteries; O *Repentance!* In the crowd of our scuffles and contentions, whither art thou escaped? A midst our cold entertainment into what quarter art thou stolen? which way art thou gone? to what region art thou fled? in what unknown country dost thou reside? tell us, that we may go and seek thee. O all hail *Repentance!*
Turn

Turn in unto us, be thou visible in this nation, that art able to repair the mischiefs, recall the vital spirits, reunite the scattered limbs of this mangled body, and in thee such an omnipotency as to effect a resurrection; weep so long over its ashes, till that moysture hath rendered them prolifical, and thou see it spring out of its urn; prepare us such a mercy-seat for God to appear upon within our walls. Let us be *Ninevites*, till thou canst make us the *new Jerusalem*; open our *Ears* to listen to our *prophets*, that we may not *have* the *Thunder* of a confounding God; lend us faith, that we may believe God, that trembling at his threatnings, we may not feel the *Terrors* of a perishing decree executed; cloath us in sack-cloth, that we may not be stript of our gorgeous rayment, sprinkle us with ashes, that the smell of fire may no more be felt within our walls; Enjoyn us to fast, that we may ere long be set down again at our spread tables; make us cry mightily, that no other cry may be heard in the City, but those of devotion; turn us from our evil ways, and from the violence of our hands, that they may not expose us to all manner of evils and the violence of Incensed justice; that thou mayest be as *Exemplary* as our crimes are *Exorbitant*. Whither can we go, O miserable people, but unto God? when we are in *sickness*, whither can we fly, but unto the *fountain* of *healib*? when in *want*, whither but unto that *treasury* of *fulnes*? when humane strength fails, whither can we go, but to om-

Jon. 3. 2.

Zeph. 2. 2.

omnipotency? when humane wisdom is baffled, whither can we go, but to omniscency? God sometimes is out of sight, but never out of bearing: our sins may drive him away so far, that we may not be able to see him, yet they can never drive him so far (though in the belly of Hell, wrapt within the horred womb of despair (s)) but he will still be able to hear us. Gather your selves together, O nation not desired; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lords anger come upon you (s). O, I beg of you by all that's dear and precious to you, for your own sake, for your dear Relations sake, for your native countrys sake, by all the hopes you have of future happiness return; else, whatsoever is set on foot for your preservation, God will blast and curse it; and his vengeance pursue you wherever you go, why will you expose your selves to the fury of a conquering foe? why will you necessitate your little ones to wish, you and they had never been born? and your posterity to curse you when layd in the dust, for leaving them only the guilt of your sins, and intayling upon them nothing but misery? if you neglect to be holy, you are base Traitors to your King and Country; you sell your souls, wives, children and nation to satistie your lusts; you betray those brave persons lives, that venture them to preserve yours. Stay not for a publick reformation, but every one endeavor to reconcile himself and

and the nation to God: one wise man may save a City (v). By this may you lay a foundation for the future happiness of a sinking people, and those yet unborn, bless you. Come then my brethren, while our superiors are consulting our welfare, let us back their endeavours with our prayers; now wrath is approaching, and heaven marching out against us, now Judgment is at the threshold, and vengeance at the door, drawing the latch, ready to come in, now the neck of our native countrey seems to lie upon the block, and the fury of heaven to be lifting up its Axe, ready to strike some more fatal blow than ever we have yet felt; let us betake our selves to our *closest devotion*, let us besiege and environ *the throne of Grace* with our sighs and groans for mercy, and never cease ringing out a loud peale of Cryes and moanes in Gods ear, till he pittie, compassionate, and deliver us; those prayers that make the longest voyage, will at length make the richest return; Therefore, though God delay us, yet pray, though he deny us, yet pray; who can tell, but that we may wrest the falling thunderbolt out of Gods hand, & pull the axe out of the arm of Almighty vengeance, and yet prevail for a Reprieve for our native country. There is no way to conquer heaven, and to put vengeance upon a retreat, but to fight upon our bended knees with tears in our eyes: Who knows, but that he whose Bowels our sins have shut, may have his bowels opened by our means and supplications,
and

•Eccles. 9.
25.

and his outstretched arm Imbrace us; That God, who hath been our *Enemy*, may at last be made our *friend*, and then, no matter who is our *Enemy*. Can we conquer him by our prayers, he will conquer them by his power. If but our ways please the Lord, he will discover or disappoint their plots, scatter them like dust before a *whirlwind*, and confound or make them to be at peace with us: such a change in us works another in him; turns all his frowns into smiles; his fury against us, into Zeal for us; the thunder of his threatnings, into the sounding of his Bowels; his compassions and Repentings will be kindled in him, in stead of kindling the fire of his Jealousie. And then, after the Dresse of the vineyard hath pulled up our pales and fences, and flung down our walls round about, and laid us wast, and torn us up; he will at length return, dresse, prune, and cut us into fine knots and borders; and this *poor kingdome*, now floating like a little spot in the midst of a sea of misery, become a fortified Island, incompassed round with golden streams of blessings, and in our laps descending showers of mercy. So, me thinks I see his compassionate eye, looking upon this Renewed face; fire from heaven falling upon this acceptable sacrifice; tears quenching all Indignation, reformation (as *Rahabs* thread hung out of the window) keeping the house in safety; judgment drawing back; the destroying Angel called off; the arrows taken off the string; the viol of wrath set by: So
long

Signs of the last Judgment.

99

long as we are peccant, God cannot but pardon sin, so soon as penitent, he cannot punish Repentance; shall not I spare Nineveh?

Signs of the last Judgment, &c.

THIS know that in the *last daies* perillous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankfull, unholy, without naturall affections, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: False Christs, and false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; and soul-deluding seducers shall lead captive and draw many Disciples after them; and shall shew great signs and wonders to seduce; insomuch, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect; and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. And you shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars; Nation shall rise up against nation, and Kingdome against Kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places. And there shall be famines and pestilences on earth; and fearfull sights, and great signs shall there be from Heaven. But before all these (beginnings of sorrow) they shall lay there hands on you, and persecute you; you shall be beaten, and brought before Rulers, and Kings for my sake; and they shall deliver you up to be afflicted; and you shall be betrayed both by Pa-

Parents and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends: And some of you shall they cause to be put to death; the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son: and children shall rise up against their Parents, and shall cause them to be put to death: and you shall be hated of all men for my names sake. Men shall not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables; when it shall be a *perillous thing* to lay down the *symptomes* of *perillous times*; and *Micaiah* seem as one that mocketh (w); and be rudely interrupted and smitten on the cheek for prophelying the truth (x); when resolute prophets shall stand upon precipices, unable to keep their ground, if they discharge their consciences; when venerable true religion shall grow out of credit, and disguised upstart errors and prophaneſſe, waited on by insolent attendants, shall be all in *fashion* and *favour*, when *Dagon* shall be brought into the *Temple*, and set above the *Ark*, and *Jeroboams calves* have more worshippers than the *God of Israel*. When the *Vultures* shall drive the *Doves* from their *houses*, and the *Wolves* contend with the *Sheep* for the *Fold*; and the Prince of darknesſe, Captains of his Train-bands, shall captivate by stratagem many of Christs Subjects, who in their Baptism received preſſe-money, to fight under his Banner to their lives end. When those

w Gen. 19.

24.

x 2 King

22.24.

those that should be healers of their nation, shall wound it by their transgressions. When there is poyson in the plaister, and the Physician himself hath the plague upon him. When the proud *Philistine* shall detie the army of the *Israelites*, the Host of the living God, and *Saul* with his men of war stand by and look on. When Piety shall be hift from the *Court*, and iniquity abound in the *Camp*. When thieves and robbers shall be as quietly permitted in stealing and robbing, as faithfull shepherds in watching their flock, and painfull labourers in working in the vineyard. When plague-fore-men shall have freedom to walk the streets, and our enemies liberty to imploy our springs. When the beasts of the field shall defile the waters of the Sanctuary, and filthy swine trample down the green pasture, wherein the Shepherds of *Israel* are wont to feed their flocks. When those shall be admitted as stewards of Divine mysteries, who put poyson into the meat of the Kings children, and impudently challenge the Churches dowry, meerly for violating her chastity, or falsely accusing her to be an Harlot. When avarice shall put on the Canonick habit, and twist it self not only with the practices, but doctrines of the Church. When Articles of religion shall be esteemed by their profitable-nesse, and *Ecclesiasticks* dispute as *Lay-men* for money, unanimous in nothing so much as a joint-reference to profit. When men shall cast dirt into the Galleries and Chariots of the
great

great King, and disgrace the Throne of his Glory, and foot-stool of his anointed; vilifie the Lords Tabernacle; spit in the face of the beauties of holinesse, and cast stones at the windows of the Sanctuary, by which the Son of righteousness sheds forth his beams of light upon the children of Sion. When all degrees of men shall have corrupted their ways, the bounds of sin even removed, and the world groaning under a second deluge of profanesse. When iniquity walks hand in hand, & to be a reall Saint, the object of hatred. When men shall carry it towards professors of religion, as if they were their *profest enemies*, and to be a friend to God, shall be esteemed to be an enemy to *Cæsar*. When the oppressors hand shall be full of spoil, the extortioners of rapine; and Christs little flock surrounded with troops of wolves, and a land-floud of abomination, shall look round about and none to deliver them. When the Harlot shall be bolder than the *innocent*, and *most professors* lukewarm, key-cold in the cause of Christ. When *modesty* must go for want of breeding, and *honesty* for want of wit. When men shall dissolve themselves into *sensuall delights*, eating, and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; as in the daies when *Noah* entered into the ark, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. And there shall be great tribulations, and distresses, and afflictions, such as were not from the beginning of the creation. And immediately after the tribulation of those

those dayes, there shall be signes in the Sun, and in the Moone, and in the Starrs; the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moone shall not give her light, and the Stars shall fall from Heaven, & upon the Earth distress of nations and perplexities; the Sea and the waves roaring, mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers that are in Heaven shall be shaken; and then shall appear the signs of the son of man in Heaven: and the tribes of the earth shall mourn; and shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with Power, and great Glory; and he shall send his Angells with a great sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four winds; and the Gospell must first be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the End come.

The maturity of our sins, the face of our distempers, and tokens of Gods displeasure, so far threaten us in this nation, that 'tis to be feared he's even weary of *repenting*, and after so many despised methods, and bills of inditement, will refuse to pass us by any more. Instead of forsaking or diminishing, we have increased the first heap, and put out our sins to usury, to reap our punishment with increase. How are we swelled with pride, blackened with malice, pined with envy, fretted with animosities, vexed with whisperings, mad with jealousies, puffed up with ambition, overflowed with drunkenness, de-

luded with profaness, polluted with adulteries, inflamed with fornication, infamous by perjuries, stigmatized with oaths and execrations? we not only neglect and deny God, but reproach and vilify him by daily assaults with our bold and insolent blasphemies, making him the mark all our wild passions are shot at; we presently question his providence or goodness, if we want any thing for our use or delight; Accuse or disclaim against him as impotent or illiberal. He stands obnoxious to all the displacencies we receive from men, nay from inanimate creatures: his sacred name must be profaned, if they vex or disquiet us: we account our fiercest reviling of men faint and Insignificant, if not inspired with the most dreadful horrid oaths. If a die or card run amiss, our profane, vile resentments are presently vented on him, as if he was the cheat that rookt us of our mony, because he secures us not from those losses to which we wantonly expose our selves, not only our eager warmer passions, but our pleasanter moods do thus invade us, and we blaspheme by way of advertisement: Every impertinent story or inspid jest, or incredible narration must be attested and recommended by an oath; That Hellish piece of oratory so over-spreads their language, that it's become the most Remarkable part of it: What profane Atheistical discourses about God and religion? what bold and insolent abuses of his word in publick houses? How are our ears

in the streets grated and pierc'd with horrid Oaths and imprecations? enough though guilty of no other crime, to sink a nation: Yea, how many solemn deliberate perjuries suborn Gods venerable dreadful name to be the Engine of our fraud and malice: And as if we thought he would for-swear as well as we, we bring him to countenance those crimes he hath vowed to punish. Thus do we with a *prodigious impiety*, contaminate even divinity it self, make it the sink of all our puddles to run into, and prostitute that name which is great wonderful and holy, to all the unholy purposes, our passion, interest, or fancies can suggest. What licentiousness Licensed in *play-houses*, where *wantonness* is more effectually Taught than Decry'd in the *pulpit*, and *Scurri-lity* prefer'd before what is *sacred*; while *personated religion* is laught at on the *stage*, it loses its due *fear* and *Reverence* in our *lives*. Besides the *vanity*, frothiness of mind, disfitting for religious duties plays naturally produce, and precious time mispent, in seeing and talking of them; what real good is learnt there, I appeal to the *lives* and *consciences* of those that plead for, and haunt them. O sinful Allurements, when *wicked Actors* have learned thee by counterfeiting, or learned to counterfeit by custom, *virtue* in the mean time glides away, and the applause of spectators bring what is nought into Imitation. From hence *Cupid* sharpens his piercing arrows, and the *Devil* erects so many *Brothel-houses*, where *unlawful*

gain is spent, and punished with poverty: our *courage* is overcome with *Whoredom*: nor is *youth* brought up in *Martial discipline*, under such kind of *Tyranny*. Ensigns and Trumpets (men of war) grow cowardly, and *luxury* effeminates our swords; from whence our enemies without wonder Triumph over us, an easie prey to every foe; nor have our *victories* deserved praise: O once renowned nations, in whom now, the very vitalls languish and decay, and hath utterly lost its pristine vigour and activity. To how *brutish* an *impudence* is *uncleanesse* grown? we need not trace men into their *privacies* and *recesses*, themselves willingly *proclaim* their guilt, and dread nothing so much, as the opinion of being *Innocent*; not to have a *paramour*, is as much as not to be a *Courtier*. He who hath the greatest interest to *debauch*, is accounted the *bravest man*: And those who in other cases are most tender of their own honour, labour to prostitute it here, and then *glory* in their *shame*. By immodest obscene *talk*, breath infection on their *bearers*; disperse and scatter their own impure fires, to the inflaming others; and make no other use of their *Eyes* than of a burning-glasse meerly to set their unclean hearts on fire. Yea, so *out-dated* a *virtue* is *modesty* become now, that the *sex* to which it was once accounted the greatest *ornament*, have put it off; look on it as a piece of *Rusticity* and *country-breeding*. That free and confident behaviour in use is, not only
apt

apt to invite assaults, but takes off all that extenuation of crime, which was wont to be allowed that *sex*, upon the supposition of their being *seduced*; and this pulling down the fence, is too often an indication they are willing to lie common: *Decency* is little regarded; and *Irreparable time* insensibly passes away, while the head is adorning, the hair curling into lascivious wrethes, and a youthful countenance disguised with patches: much cost and pains in attires to court the eye; the naked breasts and lascivious dresses, more plausible kind of pandors, Trapans and snares for the wanton behoulder; by *Ambiguous habits* adding fuel to unlawful flames. A confidence in wit incites them to scoffing, and indecency; They despise the company of their own *sex*, and are desirous to traffique away their own reputation. Clownishness is aymed to be shunned by stuperous actions; and whatsoever is of force to prevail for the staying of a *Mistress*, is lookt upon, as that which will abandon *Modesty*; Yea *Marriage*, the remedy God hath Assigned, with many serves only to exasperate the disease, and advance simple *fornication* to *Adultery*, and superadd *perjury* to *uncleanness*. Those sacred Bands are broken like *Sampsons* withs, upon every assault of the *Philistins*; and the very *thoughts* of being *confined*, makes men more apt to *range*; their only quarrel to their wives is, that they are their own. 'Tis not their *need* but *fancy* they must provide for, and gratifie two sins at once, their *vanity*, as

well as their *Lust*; their *complacency* in *undermining* the *Husband*, as great as that of *enjoying* the *wife*. *Conjugal honour* is violated; and *Hymen* conceals forbidden love, which is by consent cast underfoot; and those solemn covenants, but cloaks to cover adulterous actions: Nor is it enough to be *Evil* by *Imitation*, but *exemplary* in that which exceeds the *sin* of *Sodom* and *whoredome* of *Gomorah*. Repine not O *England*, but esteem the anger favourable, which goodness hitherto hath overpoysed, and put a *Restraint* to thy desert; since those exceed thee in punishment, whom thou outviest in sin. Ah! sinful nation, steeped in iniquity: into which the deadly serpent hath set at liberty his hellish furies; on which the *bottomlesse pit* breaths with a poysonous breath, infecting the very entrals with mortal fumes. 'Tis well, if among all other projects for promoting of *holy church*, this be not one, to *debauch* our *gentry*, the better to dispose them for imbracing that Religion which can afford them indulgence at so cheap a rate. The whole species of *Real friendship* seems to be extinguished, since the *fictitious* took place; and is become only a confederacy in sin, a combination and league against what they account the *common enemy*, *God* and *virtue*. 'Tis a rarity, almost a prodigie, to find (even among those that professe the greatest dearness) any that hath the courage to *give*, or humility to *receive* an *Admonition*. But in stead of the wounds of a friend, give the kisses

ses of an enemy (y) such mutual soothing in ill, as render it inveterate and incurable; nay, not only nourish those vices they find already planted, but sow new seeds; communicate their *personal ones* to each other: as if the community of friendship obliged them mutually to diffuse their poyson; and he that hath arrived to the more elevated mysterious part of wickedness, would lose much of the gust, if he should not get some content, to whom at once to *boast* and *propagate* his *proficiency*. So reproachful is *Sobriety* with them, as even those that value it, dare not own it; but are driven to preserve it by *shifts* and *Artifices*, or chuse to Abandon it rather than Hazard the *scandal*: So base, that they are ashamed both of *piety* and *humanity*, and had rather cease to be *men*, than appear to be *Christians*. They think it enough to damn themselves with their friends, and all their combinations are transmuted into that of *sin*; which they not only commit themselves, but laugh at the *scrupulosity* of those that dare not, or do it with a *blushing countenance*, and a *trembling Conscience*, as the reproach of the school of wickedness; because not yet attained to those heights of impiety they Glory in, who have subdued their *conscience* much easier than others do their *sins*, which they boast of and defend with as much greediness as they commit, unto whom no *sin* is so unpardonable as the thinking there is any at all; The utmost they will allow in the description of *sin*, is, that it is a thing *that*

Some live by declaiming against, and others can-
 not live without the practice of. That clap a
 fools coat on all that are not of vices train &
 retinue; As if no Art were proper for gentlemen,
 but to swagger, wanton, and rant it in the
 mode, and none fit for their company, but such as
 can talk profanely, with a Boone-grace, and swear
 in the newest fashion. As if he that will poc-
 ket up a wrong, and take a Lye any other
 way than upon the point of his sword, were
 a dastard, and deserved not the honour of any
 noble society; to be hooted at as a most un-
 pardonable Coward, that will not die for his
 Mistress, sooner than for his God, and Coun-
 try. And as if all the Snakes that hang in En-
 vie's perrewig were twisted about their ran-
 karous souls, *Hiliness* can no sooner appear in
 sight, but they crawl up into their tongue,
 thrust forth their heads at their mouth, and
 fall a hissing at, and stinging of it, as it pas-
 ses by. How are we ready to be born down
 by that spiteful enemy of all virtue and good-
 nesse; the Impudence of such, who 'tis hard
 to say, whether they shew it more in com-
 mitting sin; or defending it; of so bad man-
 ners, that scarce any thing can be Imagined
 worse, unless the wit they use to excuse them
 with; that take the measure of mens perfec-
 tions downward, and the nearer the approach
 to Beasts, the more they think themselves to
 Act like men. O unfortunate times! where-
 in wickednesse is so encouraged; approved,
 connived at, that 'tis a wonder we doe not
 Establish

Establish it by Law, and make some Act of Parliament to continue it in fashion for ever: when, he that *speaks* against *sin*, becomes more odious than he that *acts* it, and he that *reproves*, must expect the unjust retaliation of being *reproved* for his pains; and a man may with lesse peril of Scorn appear in the most superannuated dress, than own the qualities of meekness, poverty, sobriety, &c. *Virtue* bears the blame of *vices faults*, and *Vice* the *credit* of virtues goodness; Drunkenness is accounted good fellowship; Swearing and cursing, a gentile dialect, or extravagant speeches; Covetousness, frugality and thriftiness; Pride is but decency; Fornication, an harmless pleasure; Adultery, but a frolick; Flattery, civil deportment; Cheating and cosening, ingenuity; Jestings with scripture, is wit; Oppression is exacting no more than ones dues; Filthy talk, is but honest mirth; Atheisme, but rallery; Killing a man in a Duel, is gallantry; and Revenge, but a point of honour; Close-hand-ednesse, good-husbandry. He passes for a considering-man, that disputes principles; and is thought most to own his reason, that least owns his faith. Nothing moves us, but what courts our senses; and what is not grosse enough to be seen, we think too wise to be considered. A serious man is accounted an Humorist. He that dares reprove for sin, is a peevish fellow. He that complies not with others in vice, is conceited: and he that cares not for vain and idle discourse, is an Ill-bred Clown

Clown, fitter to live among Hermits, than ingenious men. He that cannot away with the Hellish Rhetorick of damming and sinking, is a precisian; and he that mourns for sin a melancholly person. Forgiving injuries, is a principle of cowardice, that Emasculates the world, gratifies Enemies, and loses the satisfaction of Revenge. Patience in adversity, is Stupidity. Humility, a symptom of a leaden spirit. To love our enemies, a piece of spanill ~~and~~ fawning: To turn the cheek not only to hazard, but invite new injuries, by owning them as benefits. Temperance, is branded for ill nature and dulness of humour. Chastity, unnaturalness. Zeal, passion. Modesty, a foolish Bashfulness. Strictness in religion, is nothing but Hypocrisy. To be meek is to be servile, a temper fit only for the abject. Paying blessings for curses, kindnesses and good turns for hatred, a Ridiculous patience, that exposes to the insolencies of many, the scorn and derision of all men, and they will be no such fools for Christs sake. Selfdenial is a vowed open madness, to part with real pleasures for an empty name, or profit, for that bankrupt thing, called conscience. Charity is arraigned of robbery, and stigmatized as a thing that picks the purse, and rifles coffers. The christian precepts of meekness, long-sufferance, and forgiving injuries are despised as rudiments of cowardice and pusillanimity. Men tear off the Signatures of honour God himself hath imprest, villifie those he hath dignified (x);

counsel

≡Prov. 18.
32.& 19.
11.

cancel his *parents* by whom Kings reign; and mark them out, as the objects of scorn, to whom God gives so glorious at testimony. Goodness is of so old a date, and constant to one habit, that it agrees not with our *Athenians*, while nothing is so *A-la-mode* as *vice*, drest in several shapes, and appears new, though it be *as old as the Devil*; and gains not only strength but impudence: We are become witnesses against our selves; of declaring our sin as *Sodom* (a) and have forced God to attest against us in a manner as conspicuous: We seem to be advanced beyond a common degree of *Hostility with God*; subjoyn malice to licentiousness, and project not more to please our selves, than displease him. We profess a *contempt*, not only of his *commands*, but of *himself*; and seek no lesse to *dethrone* him, than to *abrogate* those. By our infamous Crimes we do open violence to heaven; make it a kind of personal quarrel, and dare (as it were) the divine vengeance to vindicate it self. As if we would tempt the proof of a diety in our own destruction; and our onely design were to be *famous for our wickedness*. Armed with des-pight and contempt we summon heaven and earth to take notice of us, as if he would not or durst not punish us. When the Lord of host is fearfully and continually provoked; not only robbed, but mocked; used contumeliously, as well as unjustly, 'tis high time for him to arm himself with vengeance, and come forth to cut off a rebellious people: Grosse sins commonly,

*Isa. 3. 9.

commonly, openly committed, are as so many cords to pluck down judgment; yet men set themselves as it were on purpose to provoke his anger; joyn with their deliberate sins, a visible contempt, scorn, and defiance of Gods commands; They sin with a high hand; and not only break the law, God and nature have laid upon them, but do it to shew the bravery of their spirits; to let the world see what stout and gallant persons they be; to demonstrate what courage they have; that *they* are the men that dare storm the gates of Hell, and valiantly, violently rush on their own damnation: So unwilling are the gallant spirits of our days to go to Hell in the old way, that it cannot consist with the greatness of their spirits to be wicked at those *low rates* their *filly* Ancestors were. In all they do, they would be *taken notice of*; appear above the vulgar, and proclaim to all men, that they are none of those Melancholy, weak brain'd, mean-spirited persons, who are so awed with the apprehension of a *diety*, that they *dare not sin freely*. They pay so little of reverence due to God, that at last they turn their impiety into argument; and infer him not to be, whom thy treat so unlike one; and they will not thank his charity, that will not hope better of them. To them *Dauids Atheist* is a modest puny, and deserves the epithite of a *fool* that would not *own*, what would now a-days so certainly denominate him a Witt, and master of reason: Though at first prompted by their
interest

interest to take up the *tennet*, as a buckler against the unwelcome invasions, and checks of conscience; for the more plausible enjoyment of their lusts: but when they find their necessity made a virtue, and themselves struck into the repute of a *wis* by all but those that have none; they doubt not but their fame will increase with their irreligion; so make themselves its avowed champions; seek to win it proselites; not only *use*, but *love* it; and appear so zealous for it, as if they made it their religion to have none. How many such reverse kind of Evangelists, who with as great design unteach Divinity as the first propugners taught it? Satan now may leave his toylefome labour of compassing the earth, men do his business for him. Are there not new arts and schooles of sin daily invented and erected, where the art of sin is delivered by *Rule*, and men taught how they may wisely damne themselves, most effectually provoke God, and curse themselves into his displeasure? To put their own damnation in their prayers; instead of imploring Gods grace, beg of him to damn body and soul for ever? How many endeavour to put profaness into rhetoric? and to teach blasphemy to speak with eloquence? That know no other breeding, but to sin with impudence; or braverie, but to be brave against God; and to charge upon their own ruine? That have so conquered those prejudices they had conceived of virtue and vice, sin and shame, that they dare in the open Sun commit those sins, Cowards run into the dark
for.

b pf. 64. 6.

for. So superlatively, prodigiously wicked, that former times brought forth but *Puny's* to our *Anakims* in *wickedness*; notorious fighters against God, professors of vice in the *Devill's Academy*; improving their *ingenuity* to search out diligently *new ways* of *iniquity* (b), and to devise *oathes* that shall be *Al-a-mode*, unknown to the *less studied sinners*, and bunglers in *wickedness*. As if a consultation had been had with the *French, Italian*, and all the out-landish devills, to advise us of all their several modes of vice; we are so good at *following*, that we are more compleat than our *pattern*. How dreadfull, that in a nation professing christianity, among a people, whose genius inclines them to civility and religion; that have the greatest advantages of behaviour and education, and who are to give *Laws of civility* to the rest of the nations, there should be found so many, who deride religion, make sport with their own profaness, and so light of nothing as being damn'd, a thing not to be regarded whether they be eternally happy or miserable; and never think of it, but when they call upon God to damne them; for fear he should not do it time enough for them. But t'will be no comfort to them in another world, that they were accounted wits for deriding those miseries they then feel and smart under the severity of; nor mitigation of their flames, that they go laughing into them; nor will they endure them the better, because they would not believe them. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters

daughters of the *Philistines* and of the uncircumcised rejoyce and triumph. (c) The enemies of *our peace* have no greater incouragment against us, than to see and find us at *open wars with God*. Their sins (say they) will provoke him, when he is provoked, he will desert them, and when they are deserted by him, then shall we prevail against them. Our hearts full of impiety, is vented in atheistical drollings at whatsoever is sacred; Religion made the sport of entertainments, the common subject of playes and comedies. O! is there nothing to trifle with but God and his service? Is wit grown so Schismaticall and sacrilegious, that it can please it self with nothing but holy ground? and find nothing to carouse in but the vessells of the temple? are profanesse and wit grown such inseparable companions, that none shall be allow'd to pretend to the one, but such as dare be highly guilty of the other? that scoff at past promises, as antiquated stories, tales that never had accomplishment; and endeavour to impose upon the secure world, a disesteem of all the threats of God, as the troublesome dreames of some melancholy hungry Priest, who divines for a reward, and whose trade is to inveigh against sin: deeming them causeless curses that never come; and the passionate rants of weaker persons, who would terrifie where they cannot persuade, and frighten whom they cannot force: Decrying it as the greatest folly and most unmanly submission to yield them any consideration; a project of impoling upon credulous souls

soules, and of gaining *reall advantages* to the
managers, while they feed the *City profelites* with
imaginary ones. That temperance, chastity,
 mortification &c. were but the creations of
 melancholy reclusiv'es, who would enviously
 impose those bands upon others, wherewith
 they had foolishly fettered themselves. That
 God is more indulgent to mens appetites, which
 they may satisfie here as they please, without
 those future dangers preachers fright them with;
 which thoughts suggest to them a more than
 vulgar wisdom, not to be shaken as fooles, with
 words and a mistaken courage, which is but obsti-
 nacy; nor to be *betior'd* out of their carnall sa-
 tisfactions. That God is not extream to mark
 what is done amiss. To all declarations of
 future Judgment, they oppose his goodness
 and mercy, that so gracious a God cannot ap-
 point eternall torments for the temporall trans-
 gressions of finite creatures; thus, as if he could
 not be *just* without being *cruel*, they baffle his
veracity with his *elemency*, and make his *long-*
suffering to wear out the sense of his *justice*. *Scof-*
fers, walking after their own lusts, saying,
 42. Pet. 3. 3 where is the promise of his coming, &c. (d) such
 willfull ignorance makes these unfaithfull stew-
 ards argue from their Lord's delaying to come,
 that either he will not call them to account, or
 that they may have leasure enough to beat their
 fellow servants, and eat and drink with the
 drunken; and thereby pvoke the hand of God to
 take away his mercies, by their sacrificing them
 to their idol lusts, while Christ in his poor mem-
 bers

bers goes hungry and naked. Their tongues set on fire of hell, shoot their poisoned arrowes of oathes and blasphemies at the face of God; such as the deeply damn'd in the bottomlesse pit, could never be guilty of worse: as if they'd curse away all his blessings from the land of their nativity, and press the divine vengeance to set on fire the whole course of nature. O what rivers, what ocean of teares are competent to bewail such unutterable evils? These are such sad, such direfull transmutations, as excite not so much wonder, as griefe and lamentation? Shall I not visit for these things saith the Lord, and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this (e)? when such *monsters* appear, they *Je. 5. 3.* presage a storm in the state. When the blasphemies of the prophane, sensuality of the voluptuous, and mockeries of the hypocrite, send daily challenges to heaven, we cannot but look it should at last overcome its long suffering, awaken God to vindicate the honour of his name, and not suffer it any longer to be thus prostituted and polluted; nor sit still unconcern'd when so many indignities are continually offered him. Such exasperating crimes we cannot expect should be wholly respited to another world; but in all probability awaken his fury, and pull down present judgments. Such nationall impieties are sad indications and fatall symptoms, that we have nigh fill'd up the measure of our iniquities, and are ripened for the woes denounc'd against those, who call evil good, and good evil (f): That his *justice* will multiply our *sin. 5. 10.* *miseries*, to a proportion with our sins, which

are also increased by our unprofitableness under *foregoing corrections*, & so many methods to make us serious if any thing would. Had we slighted God and religion, under the abundance of peace and plenty, and saw no severities of Gods justice upon such as made a mock at sin; it might well have interrupted our peace, and destroy'd that plenty, which made us out of the greatness of our pride and wantonness to kick against Heaven. But to do it in despite of all Gods judgments; to *laugh in his face* when his *rod is upon our backs*; when neither pestilence, nor fire can make us more afraid of him, when we dance among naked swords; defie and reproach Heaven in midst of a citys ruin's, and over the graves of those whom the arrows of the Almighty have heaped together; what can be thought of us, but that nothing will make us serious but eternall misery? The proper effect of religion is safety and security: the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever (g); when a nation is deprived of these Blessings, 'tis a sign, it is defective in the means of them; and we may judge of the *degree* of the *sin*, by that of the *punishment*: that 'tis no ordinary *defect* in *religion*, that hath exposed us to so many *fore judgments* following so close, one upon another, not to be pararell'd by any History or example; such unusuall provocations, as former times have not been guilty of. Other ages have been careless in duties of religion towards God, and of Justice

and

and charity towards one another, but still there was a reverence payd to the very profession of religion; and those who had little of the truth in the power of it, thought it an honour to pretend to it. But was there ever any time, when the very form of religion was out of fashion? when men arrived to that impudence, as to dispute against the very being of God, and future state of rewards and punishments? and made it their business to bring the very profession of religion into contempt? when every frothy wretch who hath not seriousness enough to consider, wisdom nor grace enough to distinguish, shall be set up for a *wis* by his scoffing at *virtue*? And if this be our case, what can any (who believes a *Diety*, concern'd for humane affairs) expect to be the fruit of our irreligion and unrighteousness? but that the jealous God should in some extraordinary manner, be revenged on such a sinfull people: nor is there any thing more equall, than that those who would bring religion into contempt, should suffer under it themselves. Injuries done to the truth, and Gospel, are sad forebodes of ruin. The ministry of Christ dishonoured was a just preparation, and justification of that so severe stroke *Jerusalem's* destruction. The Gospel *honoured*, is as a wall of fire for defence, and breaks outward upon the enemies of a nation; when *despised* it burns inward. It is a Pillar of fire, and a cloud of protection, when observed; but disregarded, it is a cloud troubled with a thunderbolt, rowling up and down, and at last flashing out in lightening to destroy.

x x

stroy. Nothing delivers the history of any time so fair to posterity, as an honourable entertainment of a pure and unmixed religion, giving it the utmost freedom to shine as the Sun, to communicate it self as the air, and to run like the fountains without any interruption. *The Gospel of Christ*, is the common happiness and necessity of the world, from no nation, of which, where ever it had place, hath it used to remove, but it carried the honour, and peace residing there, with it: as the glory together with the ark, departed from *Israel*, leaving it as naked of present happiness, as of the hopes of eternall. The horror of any punishment inflicted by God, argues the offence proportionably hainous; his ways are equall, and his Judgments never exceed, but are beneath the transgression. Therefore he so severely punishes our not amending after Judgments, because impenitency is a most horrid provocation; being a contempt and despite of all his gracious and glorious attributes; for we having both tasted sin, and felt punishment, yet think the former worthy the hazard of the latter, and that one is a cheap purchase for the other; reproach and affront infinite wisdom, of having not sufficiently provided for the attainment of his end, by inventing the consequence between sin and punishment; that men might be advised not to dote upon sin, which draws after it such an inseparable throng of miseries, assuring the more sensual part, that there are just and solid comforts

comforts in obedience, and that to *disobey* shall be neither safe, nor pleasant. Yea, we thereby rudely scorn, the Divine kindnesse by which we are saved from a totall excision, and reject the Court-ship to a more endeared loves quire, being not shut up in the pit, where there is no remembrance of him, argues he reserves us for his service and embraces. We slight and undervalue his power, and brave his omnipotency, and affront him to his face, after escaping one stroke, which argues this vile esteem of God, as if he had wasted all his thunderbolts, emptied his quiver, and broke his Sword in the first encounter. When hardly come off from one overthrow, we challenge him to another, renewing the controversie by repeating our sins; we must be concluded to think he cannot triumph as gloriously in the *Vallies* as on the *Hills*, nor have strength enough for a fresh Victory (*b*), else we should certainly hear his first rod; (who can punish yet seven times more) and be ashamed that our Father hath spit in our face, and not weary him till he smite us with greater and other sorts of punishments, with an utter disinheri- tance, and our land be no more in remem- brance, except in the stories of its sin and ruine. As if our space of repentance were given us to revenge our selves upon him, and to make him rue the wounds he hath given us; how do many of us dip our tongues as 'twere in our blood, and spit it in his glorious face? O how doth this debauched age anticipate the

h 1 King
20. 23. 24.

miseries of the place of torment by continuing in sin under affliction? *Moab settled upon her Lees*, is at ease indeed, but not when emptied *from vessel to vessel*. Did *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* so provoke God, while the fire and brimstone was showering on their heads, passe over the *Isles of Chittim* and see, and send unto *Kedar*, and consider diligently, ask ye now among the Heathens, and see if there be such a thing: can the most savage Pagans pararell the crimes we glory in? that have been a people of wrath, and seem to have been born, to be as *fewell* for Judgement, and summoned upon the stage of the world, to come and behold what desolations God can bring upon a land, for the wickednesse of them that dwell therein. For those plagues and miseries which were wont to be divided among severall ages, and to fall singly and in certain periods of time, have all befallen us at once, and come upon us with the speed of halty messengers, one treading upon the heels of another; so that we have had scarce time to survey the waists and spoiles one hath made, ere another came to call for our tears and wonder. Let us sit down upon our ruines, and recount them if we can: for (i) he that sate on the *White-horse* hath shot at us, and the *Red Horse* hath marched furiously before, all bloud with the effects of *Civill war*, & the *Pale Horse* hath followed with *death* upon his back, and the *grave* at his heels, and after them those out of whose mouth issued *fire* and *smoak*, and brimstone,

i Re. 6. 1.
¶c.

stone, with the innumerable series of their miseries, and sad consequences, bringing so much poverty and desolation on the whole Kingdom. Every stroke at the magazine of life is much more dangerous, than heavier downfalls upon lesse noble parts, and speak severest intentions of that displeasure that cut us so deep in that one neck. The three late *Judgments* making up to the very head and top of the *Nation*, where they fixed themselves as if they had that commission to fight neither with *small* nor *great* but the *Metropolis*, which also descended upon the *whole*; the Issue of all, we have just cause to fear, if it be not our *speedy amendment*, will be our *ruine*. For we are not *amended*, though we are already punished not to correction only but to a *terror* and *example*, for he hath called Heaven and Earth to witnesse; the world rings with the sound of our ruines. He hath cited all nations to judge between him and us, and hath pleaded against us in his Judgements, and discovered our nakednesses putting us to an open shame; for all the world knows, the Judge thereof will not deal unrighteously; & our *sins therefore were very grievous*, and the cry of them waxen great, because he hath so destroyed us. For, where *Judgments* are engraven on the *Reverse*, *Inquiries* are *inscribed*: there needs no more to declare the *guilt* of *Sodom*, than to tell the travellers as they went a long, there once was a City, where is now a pitchy lake; and when the *Marriners* shall sayl by our shores, and say, *how is the joyous*

City become a desolation? they will soon subjoin *how was the Faithfull City become a harlot, and unrighteousnesse lodged in her?* And that now there remains nothing, but that it should punish us to excision and vengeance (though he only knows how soon, and by what ways,) our selves may guesse by our *sins* and *terrors*, that it is not far off. When judgments tread on the heels of one another, and hang together in so long a line, when God speaks once and twice, when he is not quiet with us but importunes and solicits to a tense, and we regard it not, he intends *something great and considerable*. For, he doth not fight as one that beateh the air; but having entered into particulars, at last sums up all, in a perfect effect, and lesser Judgements are but the beginnings of sorrow. When our *Physician* purges, and the distemper continues, the blood still corrupt after frequent *Plebotomie*, and *impurity* still swims up after all *evacuations*, 'tis deadly; for it argues the *whole masse* is corrupted, and nothing to be purged, but what is it *self*; God is weary of striking impenitents in order to a cure, and they must do as those in whom nature hath no resistance to make against the prevailing distemper; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, and those powers perished that should be ayded by medicine: The principles of recovery, that are as the handles by which God apprehends the soul, are lost, by great obduration in sin, and men die like beasts under those strokes, of which
they

they understand nom ore than that they oppress them. Things continue to contest (when they are in it) till one of them desert its own mode, and stations; this cannot fall on Almighty Justice, a broken melted heart running out of its former shape, ceases the controversy between God and man, but an hardened *Pharisee*, holds Judgements play, till they accomplish their own. God will not be guilty of *vain acts*, nor punish for our reformation, and then remove those punishments before we reform, except he abandon us the care of his providence, and reserve his displeasure for our finall destruction; what shall we say? when we can play with the effects of his anger and the fiercenesse of it will not melt us, incapable of impression under all his strokes, and sleep under the noise of present and approaching Judgement, that infinite wisdom can scarce invent such as will awaken us, when by a people professing true religion and godliness those sins are dayly multiplyed, that provoke him, so that he is weary of correcting us and of his own repentings. If some branches of the great tree of a Kingdom be barren, or bear evil fruit, he may in mercy prune it with some smaller Judgement, to make it bring forth good fruit; but when he is tired out in waiting for fruit, and both body and boughs be corrupted and rotten, He'll destroy it root and branch, and not suffer it longer to cumber the ground. When *false fires* appear, and the *fire of the Altar* goes out, sure God is departing

departing from his Temple. When the locusts and Caterpillars swarm in the field, and the Frogs croak in every corner of the house, the Judgment of God is already upon the land. When the Idolatrous nations join in confederacy, and the *Canaanites* are combined against the *Israelites*, and the *Israelites* are divided among themselves; when the hand of *Moses* falls in prayer, and *Amalek* prevails in battle, we must needs expect it should go ill with *Israel*. When the *Preachers* mouths are stoppt, and *Players* opened; When a nation is sick of a spirituall pluresy, and surfeit upon the bread of life; when God sees his mercies lying under the table, 'tis just with him to call to the enemy to take away. When wickednesse shoves it self on, settles and grows to a head, and the age we live in, seems the drain and sink of the sins and evils of former times, it argues our iniquities grow full, which have been some ages in filling, and we hastning to destruction. Of such a generation shall be required all the blood that was shed from righteous *Abell*, to *Zacharias*. When the Lord of the whole earth hath fenced a land about, for a Vineyard to himself, and hath done so much to it, that no more can be done, yet for grapes brings forth wild grapes, let himself (as true in his threats as that he is) tell you what he will do to this Vineyard (k). When men are not separated from their drosse, not softened by the fire of affliction, what may we expect, but that he should turn the whole
King-

Isa. 5. 5.
v.

Kingdom into a furnace of Judgment, and heat it seven times hotter, till he hath utterly consumed us. When the field is overgrown with thorns, and a whole land is sown with vice, the Harvest time must be a day of destruction; even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickednesse, reap the same (1).

1 Job. 4. 8.

The much to be feared, many ways threatened, every way deserved ruinous condition of *England*, while some preface from *Signs* in the Heavens, unusuall apparitions, and great mutations in that course and order God hath appointed in nature, others expect from former predictions of persons endowed (as supposed) with a prophetick spirit, But we have a more sure word of Prophecy. I am no Prophet, nor the Son of a Prophet, but I will stand upon my watch, and set my self upon the Tower, and will watch to see what the Lord will say unto me, and the Lord answered me and said (m) Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed but understand not, and see indeed but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed: Then said I, Lord how long? and he answered, untill the City be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed man far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst

m Ha. 1. 12.

* If. 6. 9.
&c.

* Deu. 29.
&c.

* Jer. 6. 29.
&c.

* Jer. 5. 3.
&c.

* 1 Sam. 12.
2: 25.
Isaiah 1.

* Ez. 22. 34.
&c.

* If. 9. 13.
14.
2ep. 3. 1.
&c.

midst of the land (*n*); ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes, in the land of *Egypt* unto *Pharaoh*, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land. The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles; yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day (*o*): The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, for the wicked are not plucked away: reprobate Silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them (*p*). Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction, they have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return; wherefore a lyon out of the forrest shall slay them (*q*): Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your Heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you, but if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye, and your King (*r*). Thou art the land that is not cleansed, nor rained upon in the day of indignation; therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath (*s*). For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts; therefore the Lord will cut off from *Israel*, head and tail, branch and rush in one day (*t*). Thou hast forsaken me, thou art gone backward, therefore will I stretch out mine hand against

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against thee, I am weary with repenting (v). ^{v Je. 15. 6.}
 She hath wearied her self with lies, and her ^{Am. 4. 11,}
 scum went not forth out of her, her scum ^{12.}
 shall be in the fire. In thy filthinesse is lewd-
 nesse, because I have purged thee, and thou
 wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from
 thy filthinesse any more, till I have caused my
 fury to rest upon thee (m). Read *Lev. 26.* ^{Ex. 24.}
 Now all these things happened unto them for ^{12313.}
 ensamples, and they are written for our ad-
 monition, upon whom the ends of the world
 are come (x). Whatsoever were written afore- ^{1 Cor. 10.}
 time, were written for our learning (y): God is the ^{I I.}
 same & our sins are more hainous than theirs in ^{Jud. 7.}
 former ages. He deservedly suffers, that falls by ^{Rom. 15,}
 stumbling at the same stone, at which he da- ^{4.}
 shed who went before him. More exactnesse
 in walking and working become us who have
 more light to guide us. The sins of a Church,
 as the fruit (that hangs in the Sun) of a well
 ordered garden, ripen faster than those of a
 wilderness (z). We may expect the same ^{Am. 3. 2.}
 judgments threatned, where such sins reign:
 Even the generall denunciations of the wrath
 of God against all ungodlinesse, and unrighte-
 ousnesse of men, who hold the truth in un-
 righteousness; attested unto by so many severall
 instances of such as have fallen under this
 wrath, leave every man to conclude Gods an-
 ger against his own particular sins, as cer-
 tainly as if a Prophet had been sent on pur-
 pose unto him; for, as 'tis not the appearance
 of a Prophet, nor his particular application,
 that

that makes the threatnings of God effectually, because all were not prevailed upon to repent, to whom the Prophets addrest themselves, so neither, more certain; for no one particular Prophet can possibly have so many evidences of his being sent from God, as there are of the whole Scripture, of Christ himself, and all the Prophets, who spake by his Spirit. Thus many, prudently comparing the word of God, with his usuall providences, and applying them to the times and lives of men, have been able to fore-see and declare those future events, which have as certainly come to passe as if a present inspiration had inabled them to prophesie. Generall denunciations, may by prudent observation be fixed to particular times and persons: 'Tis as possible for us to know the

Mat. 16. *Signs of the times*, the approaching of Judgement, as what weather the *face of the Sk* will wear the next day (a). For there are some previous circumstances in the states of affairs, in the conversations of men, (as their generall debaucheries, impudence, obstinacy in sin, notwithstanding Gods word, and rod, &c.) in which the approaches of common distresses are as conspicuous, as a following storm or tempest is in the gathering together of the blackest clouds. When *Amaziah* was so strangely infatuated, as to forsake the God who had given him a wonderfull victory, and to worship those of his defeated enemies; which could not deliver their own people out of his hand, and was so obstinate in his folly, as to terrifie the reprovng Prophet, he concluded

cludes from thence his approaching destruction, for he forbore and said, *I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsell (b):* Judgments may intermit and suspend themselves, though they intend their own retrieve; as a snare is taken up, that hath taken nothing, that it may be more conveniently placed, and at a better time. And if we can neither deny those severall sad appearances of Judgment, nor say that God inflicts any with a design, or not out of infinite counsell, nor plead our own reformation, how can we but expect the succession of Judgment, till there be some evident determination of things by them, which yet may be concealed in a present truce. As the great complaints of the humane nature against it self, argue it all in a lapse, so the generall out-cries of the severall parties of a nation against one another, and all against the whole, concerning the inefficacy of Judgments, are strong arguments we are unreformed. And if we appeal to the prognosticks of the most sober breasts upon the present scheme of our condition, would they not be very trembling? seeing besides the uncertainty what a day may bring forth, we look more like a people reprieved than restored, and settled. The great symptomes of danger, are those our sin discover upon us, and they, not softened or mitigated with those things that may stay off the blow, so much as from our own days. *If one sinner destroys much good, and*

we

b3 Chron.
25. 14, 15
16.

we see them with their sins by multitudes, thronging into the broad light, while in publick appearance, we have very little of the preservations against Judgments, or the usuall reasons of their suspensions; how can we but fear, the clouds should return after the rain; till we are punished to seven times more, and Judgment cease in destruction; when God shall begin, and also make such an end, that affliction shall not rise up the second time.

Englands only Remedy.

YET because there are better hopes, though retired into cloffets, and secret corners, we may not despair a preservation from utter ruine; through that mystery of providence so be observed in the government of the world; whereby God, without desolating states, totally redeems their converts with the righteousness and judgment he executes, purges away their dross and Tinn by the spirit of burning, exciting the fire to a just intention to such an end, purifies them seven times, in the seven fold punishment, and then reinstates them in glory, and over that glory creates a defence: A lengthening of our tranquility, is only a speedy breaking off our transgressions (c), by a personal publick reformation: God may deliver us from one judgment to reserve us for another, but no striking off the score, till the
Creditor

^c Dan. 4.
27.

Creditor is satisfied; nor keeping off judgment, but by driving away sin. There's never any sword drawn on earth, till first drawn in heaven; nor sheathing it, till God be pacified, by our laying down the arms of our rebellion that are taken up against him; nor appeasing his wrath, but by withdrawing the fewell of the fire of his indignation. If the flag of defiance be taken in, he presently listens to an accommodation: And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not. (d) God cannot turn off suitors, nor despise suppliants; nor professe enmity, when men have taken away the ground of discord: He cannot disgrace men with their errors, nor put them to the blush, where they are ashamed of their iniquities (e): Nor march out with his Trained bands, when they prepare to meet him (f); at what time I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them (g). Will God insult upon the prostrate? and set his face against them, that seek it? will he wring the sin-offering out of the sacrificers hand? and kill them at the sides of his own Altar? will he try martyries with them that submit? or lay them gasping for life, who are already half dead in spiritual anguish? will he lay his Axe at the

d Jon. 3. 10

e Ez. 43. 10

f Am. 4. 12.

g Jc. 18. 7

root of the fruitful Tree? and make a *wast* upon the ground, that brings forth herbs meet for the Dresser? God reciprocates with true penitents; if they turn, he doth. He bathes a sword in heaven against contemners; and waters a nation with blood, where live his professed enemies: But he cannot fight with sighs and tears, bended knees, wringing hands, pacifying lips. There's nothing left for the Hammer of judgment to bruise or break, if the heart of stone be turned into a heart of flesh. God hath no *Rods*, but for the *disobedient*; nor *Blood-axe*, but for *Malefactors*. If *repentance* have shaven us, there's no other sharp *Razer* to come upon the head. God cannot strike where the *penitent* hath given the first blow. The very standing up in the gap, fences out all judgments. Had *England* been soaked in tears, it had not wallowed in blood; nor felt the violence of avenging justice, if forsaken the violence of their hands. *London* had not been so crowded into the grave, if we had known the plague of our own hearts; nor lyen in ashes, if it had been cloathed in sackcloth. *Repentance* discharges from deserved Judgment. God hath no *sword* for the *yielding*, but *obstinate*: He can fight with his *Enemies*, not with those that *sue for peace*: *Reconciliation* would redress all sad accidents. O that there were such an heart in us, that it may be well with us.

The nobles
the Magi-
strates
called
upon.

Magistrates, maintain and vindicate the veneration of religion; the whole design of which is nothing

else but to procure the private and publick happiness of man-kind, and restrain them from whatsoever would make them guilty and miserable to themselves; unpeaceable, and troublesome to the world. 'Twill require all the kindness you can do it, by the advantages and blessings it drawes down upon *civil government*, from him, who is engaged to honour those that honour him, but delivers to infamy and contempt those that lightly regard him. Righteousness establisheth, exalteth a *nation* (b); whose mighty success and prosperity hath been a *reward* given ^{b Pr. 14. 34.} by God for their eminent justice, sobriety, &c.

(i). The *Roman empire* was strong as Iron, while their virtues remained firm, but upon dissolution of their manners, mixed with miry clay, and the feet upon which that empire stood, to be broken. Publick bodies and communities of men as such can only be rewarded and punished here. The general and crying sins of a nation, unless prevented by a general repentance, though they may stay till their iniquities are full, never escape publick judgment, for the present vindication of the divine majesty and Laws, and to give some check to the overflowing of wickedness. The greater and more numerous *offenders* are, the more his justice is concern'd to vindicate the affront; when a whole nation combines against him, when hand joyns in hand, they shall not go unpunished. He turns a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein (k); take away the wicked from before the King, and his throne shall be estab-

m Ro. 13. 2

blished in righteousness (l). The wisest magistrates have ever thought themselves concerned to cherish *religion*, without which *government* wants its firmest foundation, it being the greatest and constant obligation upon *conscience*, to all civil and morall duties. Such are not to be tempted from their obedience, by any worldly consideration, knowing, he that resisteth authority, resisteth the ordinance of God, and shall receive to themselves damnation (m): while *subjection* for fear of the magistrates power; will cease, when men can rebel with safety and to advantage. He that is conscious to himself of so great an injustice, as the neglect of his duty to God, cannot rationally be fideious to any other parts of righteousness; or religiously revere one commandment, who despise the other nine. 'Tis not probable those should have any great *sense* of duty to their King, that have none to their maker; or be subject for *conscience-sake*, who have none. 'Tis religion plants in men those qualities that dispose to peace and amity, fills men with a spirit of kindness and universall charity; secures every man's interest, by doing as we would be done by; and exterpates pride, covetousness, injustice, hatred, revenge, cruelty, peremptoriness in a mans own opinion, perverseness, uncompliance of humour in things lawful and indifferent, all those passions and vices which render men unsociable and burdensome to one another. It heals mens natures, sweetens their spirits, corrects and mortifies those lusts and passions that make the

the world so tumultuous & disorderly, troublesome and tempestuous, which were religion conformed to, would be a more lovely desirable quiet habitation: But for those small remainders of virtue left scattered in it, humane society would soon disband and run into confusion; the Earth would grow mild, and become a great forrest, and men turn beasts of prey towards one another. Chastity, temperance, Industry, in their own nature tend to health and plenty; truth and fidelity in our dealings, create loves confidence and good will among men, the greatest bands of peace: While wickedness naturally produces publick mischiefs; intemperance and lust breeds infirmities and diseases, which being propagated spoil the strain of a nation: *Idleness* and *Luxury* bring forth *poverty*, this tempts men to injustice; *that causes* enmities and animosities, & *those* strife, confusion, and every evil work (*n*). ^{n. 1. a. 4. r.}

One would think then, virtue should find it self a seat, where ever humane societies are, and religion be owned and encouraged in the world, untill men cease to be governed by reason. Come then ye *Heroes* of our nation, see after the observation of our *Sabbaths*; upon *this* God often hung the glory or desolation of the Princes and people of Judah (though an extern rite of religion, because it carry'd so much of the reverence of divine worship, & acknowledgments of God) & still suspends the greatness or depression of nations, to whom the notices of himself and Jesus Christ are given, upon their subjection to those sacred principles, and the Instituti-

ons wherein they are concerned: our Christian Sabbath being slipt out of the shell of a Jewish ceremony, into the spirituality of the Lords day, and the morality of a rest, for the publick and private Exercises of Religion, our obligations to it still continue with those advantages wherein it was made for man: all contemptful disenclosures or unworthy prostitutions of it, must needs therefore Imply, not only a great senseless of God and his glory, whom we would dispute into the narrowest room, but too much of an Irreverence of him, if not a defiance to him. Make your sword a shaddow to the innocent, a terror to evil doers; root out the common enormities of our age, with utmost industry. Burn the Golden Calf in the fire, grind it to Powder; strew it upon the water; abolish all the incormorials of those things, which have been occasional to the sins and sufferings of the times. Arise ye *generous spirits*, and divert destruction from your habitations, one famous city is reduced to ashes, up and be doing, to drive away threatening flames from the rest: Like offences will bring on them the same Judgment, unless deserved punishment be insisted on wicked conspirators, and justice bring into light the authors of our slaughter. Those laws will be dreaded and obeyed, when put in execution, which are disregarded for want of it. The hainous offences which have provoked God to anger, by exemplary punishment may be speedily amended, the frowns of

of heaven diverted, an incensed diety appea-
sed, before he again burst forth and there be
no remedy. By the most prudent and effec-
tual means endeavour the curbing those bold
and insolent *defiers* of heaven, who take a
pride in being Monsters, and are come to that
degree of impudency, as to boast themselves
in the follies and deformities of humane na-
ture. Those frequent profane scoffings at pie-
ty among us, are but as so many blasts of ma-
levolent vapors, to nip and destroy the prac-
tice of it, among those, whose greener reso-
lutions set them not above their malignant
influence. Nothing can be matter of greater
wonder, than that among a grave and sober
people (none more generally indispos'd to, and
can worse brook it, seriousness and zeal in re-
ligion being almost the natural temper of the
English) profaneness should be permitted to
gain so much ground, and the most excellent
and reasonable religion, made the scorn of
fools, and prophaned by the unhallowed
mouths of any who will venter to be damned
to be accounted witty: A thing never suffe-
red in any nation; whatsoever was their *reli-*
gion, the *reputation* of it was alwayes preser-
ved *sacred*. God himself would not suffer the
Jews to speak evil of other Gods, though
they were to destroy all those who tempted
them to the worship of them; The Heathens
would not suffer their Gods to be reviled,
which yet were no Gods; and shall it among
observers of the true God, be allowed by any

man, to make a mock of the maker of heaven and earth; and to breath out blasphemies against him who gives us life and breath and all thing? That religion should be made the object of their rally, who make it not their care and business to search into it, yet throw out their bitter scoffs and profane jests against it, doth not become the gravity of a nation professing wisdom to permit, much less the sobriety of a people professing Christianity. Those whose first approaches to goodness were mercenary and out of compliance to others, may, by coming within view of it, discern it so Amiable, that they may after love it for it self. 'Tis scarce Imaginable, the vulgar (considering their rude Ignorance) should embrace it upon the strength of *speculation*, therefore must be allured by the bait of *secular invitation*. What weight soever they, that advance not higher than the meer form of Godliness, may add to their own doom, yet is it less mischeivous to the world than the contrary extream; *Hypocrisie* being a sin that cannot well set up for proselites, because it never owns it self ot a *distinct party* from *true piety*; it shews some reverence to religion, and so far owns its worth and Excellency, as to acknowledg, it deserves to be counterfeited. The example of a fained Christian may teach others to surmount their copy, and be that in sincerity, which he is but in appearance; whereas profaness pretends to no such possibility, breaths nothing but contagion, and like a Pest infects

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communities: It openly declares against religion, and endeavours to make a party to drive it out of the world. O Be *Hercicall* not *Dastards* in doing Justice. Stand in the gate of the camp, and do execution upon the master offenders; Put your hands with all earnestnesse to manacle & ham-string those mighty men in outrageous wickednesse, who are engaged in a continuall and open *Theomacy*, as if they would proceed in affronting God, till earth were turned into Hell. Timorous, cowardly Magistrates, are *Slaves* to their Superiors, *Sycophants* to their equalls, *Tyrants* to their inferiors; like a *Hare* in a *Lyons* Seat, the frown or check of a great one, frights him from his conscience. *Publick miseries* are taken as reproaches of those who are in power to prevent publick sins; give some reverence to religion, punishing severely our atheisticall profane scoffers, that deride, scorn, cast reproach upon righteousness which establishes a nation, as the worst sort of seditious persons, open rebels against the God of Heaven, unprofitable noxious burdens, enemies to the publick peace and safety of a nation, & pernicious to Civill Government. The most plausible offender is secretly seditious, and stirs up quarrels in Heaven: There's no such *Traitor* to any state, as the wilfully wicked; notwithstanding all their pretences to publick worship, they contribute more to our publick calamities, than the plots and oppositions of our open enemies. Connivance, or neglect makes personall sins publick, and brings their
guilt

• 1 King 2.
31.

guilt on the nation, but is taken off when punished (o) by doing that which Gods vengeance is coming to do. None are so good friends to the state as courageous, impartiall Magistrates, nor procure so much credit to Government, as their strict execution on great and noble offenders. Those whom their crimes have debased, deserve no favour in their punishment. God makes difference of sins, none of persons. Some crimes are restless suitors, and will not leave clamouring for Judgment, till its mouth be stopt with revenge. Favour to the offender, is cruelty to the Favourer; patronizing evill, instead of avenging it; not only command, consent, countenance, but very permission Feoffs publick persons in those sins they might and will not prevent; and in Gods account stand guilty of all those crimes they have received power to restrain, or punish, but do not exercise it; *malum qui cum potest, non prohibet, facit*. How many sober, seeming religious Magistrates, shall be indited, and condemned at Gods Tribunal, as the greatest swearers, drunkards, sabbath-breakers in the land: both enmity and safe-guard is from God; 'tis the surest policy to conciliate, and have peace with him. Sin only ruines Kingdoms. Goodnesse hath been ever a stronger guard than valour. Nature swells out of its place to prevent a vacuity. When the seats of dignity are empty, that is, not filled with good Government, who is not ready to presse into them? when the

the *Prophets* chairs are unfurnished by persons of graver investiture, naked *Sauls* croud into them. Now the foundations of religion are shaken, and profaness with a bold assault like a fatall flood threatens to overturn us, where are ye the *sons* of the *Highest*? ye *deputies* of *Moses*, ye *Magistrates* put in power, not only to lament our *sins*, but to take away the cause of our *Lamentations*. In vain you enquire into other causes of our great decay of trade, while you neglect the grand one, the decay of piety. In vain you go to free us from other grievances, unlesse you pull down the grand one of all, *Sin*: It's not *conspiracies* abroad, but our *scandalous lives*; reform that, and you reform all; and till you do that, you do nothing: consult good laws, and see them executed. In vain we make peace with *Forraign enemies*, so long as we nourish these *Regicides*, and *murderers* in our own bosomes. May it then be the happinesse of our times and nation, to be rescued from the further pursuities of Divine displeasure by your mediation for reformation, by an efficacious interposall against licentiousnesse of practice, which grows speedily to an height, when those whose honour and gravity forbids them to stoop to those meanesses of vice which others fall down to, have not yet that zeal against it; but either draw too nigh the *circus* or Ring of the disorders, or entertain the actors of them with familiarity, which gives a boldnesse to wickednesse,

ness, that soon espies its own advantages, and grows insolent upon them, ready not only to rise with violence against common opposition, but to dismount *authority* it self, which hath no greater security than its own virtue enstamped upon those under it. Be not over much wicked, hath a larger place upon states than persons; for besides that Justice makes more hast to punish a combination in evill, the fury of contrary passions and lusts is so outrageous, that they violate all things in their mutuall encounters, and the inundation grows so strong through the meeting of so great a body of evill, that the destructive force runs into suddain confusions, and is more impatient of those abatements a single wickedness must admit, and so more leisurely brings forth death. There are few instances of any who have been the notorious debauches of their time, but have been exemplary for the fate attending them, except prevented by a sudden return to a sober mind; but not any of an extremely corrupted age, but unhappiness, if not ruine hath rode along with it. Do not recede from the interests of your calling, nor do vulgar things to lessen your reputation; but *prenoble* your priority with *honorable actions*: Let your *lives* be as sacred as your *laws*, that men may prize *these*, and not dare to violate *those*; that if wicked men will not love religion, yet they may pull in their heads, and not dare to despise it: If their hearts will not renounce their lusts, let it not

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be safe to act them but in disguise and darkness, nor in the face of the Sun. Consult the *honour* of your station; let the births of your actions be answerable to the dignity of your callings; do not *pejorate* your degree; nor rip the fur off of your *cap of maintenance*. Those that would command the hearts of men must shew them God in their faces; so irradiate their Thrones by being like him, that men may gaze with adoration, and obey with reverence. How can they blush at those vices they observe placed with thee in the chair of Dignity: Guilt quells the courage of the bold, ties the tongue of the eloquent, &c makes greatness it self sneak and lurk, and behave it self poorly. They that sit in Thrones of Judgment, should be able to scatter away evill with their eye, by their very presence, to look and strike an awe in offenders. If they dart nothing but malignant influences, who are plac'd as Stars in our Firmament, no wonder if an universall Pest ensue. 'Tis they have brought vice into countenance, advanc'd it to this repute, made it the mode and fashion of the times; that people dread the singularity of being innocent. What can be more persuasive to the vulgar to embrace virtue, than to see it made the *election* of those, whom they suppose have most Judgment to discern its value; so fall not on it blind-fold, and who have all the contrary pleasures of sin within their reach, nay, prostrate at their feet sueing for entertainment; so are not cast on it by impotence?

p Ps. 12. 4

tence? And what a temptation to them to run to all excess of riot, when they see their superiors have bearen the path before them, immerst in the most brutish sensuality? which of them will endure to be sober, when drunkenness shall be accounted so dignifying a quality, that it makes a Peasant company for a Lord? When Gentlemen are Atheistically, *Clowns* will think themselves very modestly *wicked*, if they be but *profane*. And when they hear their betters discharge loud volleys of oaths, they will soon find they are as well qualified for that part of greatness as the best, their tongues are as much their own (p); and will be glad that by such an ealie employment, they can be *Gentlemen* so good cheap. The *body* follows the *head*, their vices commend and countenance it. Miserable that people, whose Rulers instead of making up the breaches, enlarge them; instead of punishing, plead for vice; by their scandalous viciousness, discountenance not, but animate, and encourage it. When a distillation of evil falls from the Head upon the lungs of any state, there must needs follow a deadly consumption. The Sovereign sometimes is smitten in his Subjects; neither is it otherwise than just, that the arraignment of many malefactors run in the stile of wrong done to Kings Crown and dignity. *Eminency* of *virtue*, (in meanest persons, commands an awfull respect) casts a lustre upon your very places; and by a strong reflection, doubles the beams of Majesty; while *impiety* strangely

strangely lessens greatnesse, secretly and unavoidably derives some weaknesse upon authority it self. When perswasions of reformation find freest entertainment with those that have most power to promote it, and Princes are not only *Philosophers* but *Divines*, publishing repentance and amendment of life by those sovereign documents; the face of their authority and example shining upon holiness; how orderly doth this reformation descend from the superior regions, without that tumult and suspicion of design, that usually accompanies popular attempts therein; and the greatest honour; for such being nearer God, the originall of all, we accept from them recommendations of goodness as acts of bounty, with thankfulness; but not without disdain and regret from them below us. How hard is it for they that wear soft rayment, and are in Kings courts, to see Heaven through the palace casements. The rich man's wealth is his strong city (q). There lies hid a kind of *forcerie* in the throne: The robe is a kind of *enchanted vesture*. How many have lost their sight, with glaring too much on the glittering heap, and their senses by drinking too deep out of the intoxicated cup of abundance: so infatuated with their chariots of glory, as if they should out run all miseries: because they have such greatness to trust to, distrust not to be happy against all accidents. The throne and Robe, have kept them from being array'd in the pure and white linnen, and sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The cressed worlding cannot endure a check, but conceives

Pr. 10. 15

r 1 Cor. 1.
26.

celves himself superior to all Reproofs. God draws few *servants* from *Mammons thresholds*; not many noble are called (*r*). Rich merchants who are bartering for so many Jewells, seldome purchase the pearl of price; or seek for durable riches, that lay up Gold as the dust. Great ones are seldome good leaders: They who should appear in the front, come in the rear: they that should be exemplary, think themselves exempted. He that hath great adventures to put in his ship, sailes last. The Devills prison is fill'd chiefly with persons of high birth and fortunes: he hath in fetters honorable slaves; his captives go in scarlet, wear golden chaines, ride in coaches, lye upon Beds of Ivorie. These lofty pines are most barren. How many had been humbled to the Earth, but that their grandeur would not suffer them to come on their knees. But, the cry from heaven ought to be as shrill in their ears, as of the most despicable. Greatness must stoop and listen, as well as penury and indigency. O now God denounces destruction, Trample on pomp, slight splendor, be as active to quiver up Gods arrowes, and to sheath up his sword, as he that grinds at the mill, or crouches for a peice of silver in the streets; for word came to the King of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes (*s*): Forgetting all dignitie and grandeur, he not onely *moves* with the rest, but *rises* up with the first: He sits, not like a King, but a Minor, one under authority, or

s Jon. 3. 6.

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an head-servant (at best) among the rest of the attendants, and bowes before his master. The Cedars should have their Judgment-scales, shiver and break at the voice of the Lord. Gods lightning strikes upon the highest mountaines. There is no preservative against divine wrath, no *antidote* against *Cesar*. Have great men no *soul* nor *Superior*? What is a throne of state, to him that hath Heaven for his? Or a scarlet robe to him that is cloathed with jealousie as with a garment? Is an embroidered nightcap, a head-piece, or a velvet jacquet, a breast-plate against his blowes? Can a golden scepter fright away judgment? Or all the jewells of the crown redeem from vengeance? Shall the munition of rocks be a safe defence? Shalt thou reign because thou dwellest in *Cedar*? God takes *Kings* by the collar, and hurles them under his feet; he smites the great ones with breaches, and makes the house of Ivory to perish. Those crownes that now sit light on their heads, shall ere long lye heavy on their consciences, that think it beneath them to own religion, any further than 'tis subservient to their civill interest; set up the Kingdom of Christ no faster than they can rear their own, and had rather themselves should reign in a corner, than their master rule in the whole world. When *Emperors* and *Kings* shall be brought, not in chaines of gold about their necks, but in fetters of Iron about their heels. When the peers and powers, and potentates of the Earth, shall hold down their heads and hold up their hands, and cry

L

guilty.

guilty. When most of all the mighty, and all the almost Almighty, that have disrobed Christ of his title, and rob'd him of his honour, shall be lead up and down this court, to be gaz'd on, and hooted at by all the saints, as prisoners of Law and prizes of Justice. (t).

† Ps 149.6.

&c.

1 Cor. 6.2.

The mini-

sters called

upon.

☉ Is 58.7.

Watchmen, cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, shew your people their sins. (v) Mistake not your commission which is not that of an *Herauld*, to make a party, or proclame war among men, but of an *Ambassador*, to reconcile them by holyness to God. One soul gained to piety, will more promote your account than many thousands secured to a sect. Be devoted to get God, not your selves proselites; to correct exorbitant crimes in others, not to propagate your own nice and subtile disquisitions. O how wounding a spectacle! to find those *Christ* hath made fishers of men, entertaining themselves like children with picking up shells and pebles on the shore, nay angling about them too; no wonder if they make the disciples complaint, we have toyled all night, and have taken no-

☉ Luk. 5.5.

thing. (w) That were designed for the highest atcheivements, the pulling down Satans Kingdome, yet devote themselves to ignoble contests, and account their conquests, not from the number of soules won to God, but of opposers worsted in an argument: tear not faces, nor spare offences; but with all authority rebuke and warn them night and day; by passionate, powerfull arguments compell them to come in,

lest

The Ministers called upon.

157

* Ez. 3. 18.

lest their blond be required at your hands (x). How many consume in the flame of their own vicious courses, because none pull them out of the fire, nor convert them from the Error of their ways? sin would never flourish with such a green top, were wicked men hewen by the prophets (y), and smitten with the rod of Gods mouth (z). But alas, the priest puts honey into the sacrifice, and saves the soul alive that should dye. (a) He limbs all his pictures, as may best please the eye; and dishes out his lipits according to the pallat of the age; so, conscience is not awakened, but cast into a sleep, because the noise of their sins doth not ringle in their eares, and soules go fettered to hell, because their chaines are not shaken about their heeles. O bear them on your breasts at continual sacrifices. Weep before the porch and the altar. And do not unhallow the consecration of the Lord upon your foreheads. Live not, as if you thought to go to heaven some other way than that you teach the people. Though your uncleanness pollute not the offering, for its virtue is not from the agent, but institution; and therefore to abhor it, is to make holy things guilty of our profaness, to contemn heavenly dainties, because administered by a Raven; to fall out with God, because we find cause of offence from men, and to despise him, because he is offended: 'Tis no miracle to see a man raised to life by a dead prophet: yet by drowning your sermons in pots and impurities, makes so many atheists, and men nauseate what comes out of your nasty filthy

y Ho. 6. 5.

z Is. 11. 4.

a Ez. 13. 19

fingers; and fortifies profane wretches. He that with never such piercing arguments deborts from that sin himself commits at next opportunity, may be supposed to have no reall opinion of it, but rather so passionate a love, that he is jealous any but himself should have its embraces; and so, will not avert, but excite others appetite to tast of that, they see is thought so desirable as to be monopolized. How ill doth your rubie colours sute your white cloathing; your noses dy'd with grapes. and your faces with their clusters, carbuncles: how sad, to hear belches proceeding from yesterdays wine mixed with what is sacred, your tongues heard in the tavern, which ought to be in the pulpit? that gravity which holy precepts require is despised or disaffected; levity of speech detracts from the weight of words; so are had in odium and undergo the contempt of the world: publick worship is abandoned, ancient customes disregarded, and reverence due to the whole clergy fades away; their words being contradicted by an unanswerable life: and whilest one prefers his teacher for conformable manners, the common sort dislike such kind of discrimination. How can you expect to be believed by others, whose actions so confute your words, that 'tis plain you do not believe your selves; or be regarded by those that hear you; that have nothing in your manners (whose calling is so holy) different from others: but are religious in, and other men out of the pulpit: as if the house of God were a theater only to act in, and you
are;

are, what men ought to be in your lives. You are debtors both to the wise and unwise (*b*). God will not brook the deniement of the Priest-hood (*c*). Woe to the Idoll (*d*) wicked Shepherd (*e*). A Prophets punishment there shall be, as well as a Prophets reward, to him, who knew every thing but how to keep himself happy.

Ro. 1. 14.

Num. 12. 1.

Nehe. 13.

Zec. 11.

17.

6. 10.

Governours, see you & your house serve the Lord (*f*), who hath committed them to your charges and unto whom for them you must give an account. Every *Master* hath so much of the prophet, that he is set as a *Watchman* (*g*) over his *Family*; and ought as jealously to observe the approach of any vice towards it, as a Centinell doth that of an enemy. They with theirs are common servants to the one great Master of the world & the subordination of the one to the other, is but the wise oeconomy of their Lord, who hath constituted the one as stewards, or Supervisors to regulate the rest: To neglect this charge, is a piece of inormous unfaithfulness: To avoid which guilt, have a tedious care over, and make strict inspection into the manners of those intrusted to you, and accordingly apply instructions, admonitions, reproofs or encouragements. Avow such a love to piety and detestation of vice, that your servants may see, there is but one way of approving themselves both to their earthly and heavenly Master. Let not your actions give your edicts the lye. In vain you advise against your own practice. Conscience of your own crimes choakes the accuser. With

The Ma-

sters cal-

led upon.

Jos. 14. 15.

Eze. 3. 17.

what face or heart can you punish your *own* sins in *another's person*? We make our selves ridiculous, to leave our own house on fire, to go quench our neighbours; and rebuke those sins abroad, we tolerate at home. Every notorious vice, is destructive against the spirit of Government, and debases the man to an evenesse with common persons. *Lead the way* in an holy life, so may you challenge to be followed. *Innocency* gives an artificiall and advantageous authority over our brethren, and casts a more dreadfull, awefull, dazling lustre than any other accomplishment. The foyle and scandals of a publick governing man, destroys the efficacy of that authority that is just and naturall. You authorize the evill you commit, *his peccat, qui exemplo peccat*: for you *teach* evill by doing it, and do evill by *teaching* it. *Superiors* are their families *Looking-glasse*, by whose President most dresse themselves. Corrupt Patrons shall find an unanswerable Inditement for the *foul copies* that have been taken from them: By *conniving* at vice you *nourish* it, and by *sparing* it, *committ* it. What is not by you punished in others, is made punishable in you. He that favours present evils, entailes them on his posterity. O! how happy are many *Children* whose *Progenitors* are in Heaven, being left an *Inheritor* of *Blessings* together with their estates; while wicked Ancestors lose the thanks of a rich Patrimony by the curse that attends it. In vain we look for good from those children we have
neg-

neglected; or grieve for those miscarriages in elder ages, our care might have prevented betimes. The way to make a good Kingdom is to have a godly family, a nursery of piety, and to walk in it with a perfect heart (*b*). He not only obliges the common wealth, *b Pl. 101.* but is as 'twere a Patriot to Heaven it self: provides it with inhabitants, and helps to secure it from that emptinesse and depopulation, wherewith the generall wickednesse of men seem to threaten it. *2.*

You that hate the name of *Christians* be *The Prophane called upon.*
Royallists; though you value not your *soules*, be *Loyall to your King*; put your selves into such a posture, as with the reason of men you can affirm, will be most advantageous to the good of your *Sovereign*. 'Tis not your *Dam-me's* your *Sink-me's* will do it; these are the secret *Fire-balls* that have blown up our prosperity; the cursed *incendiaries*, that have set Heaven against us, and alarum'd Almighty vengeance thus far to pursue us. Fancy not from his great longanimity that you have vapoured God (as you are used to do men) into a tameness: mistake not impudence, or desperation for courage; frantickly desie not that omnipotence which you cannot resist. You dare to humour or win a fantastick *Miltris*, venter upon the wrath of your maker; your neck to the Halter and your souls to the Devill, for the wall or a wrie word: such true sons of valour, as even in cold blood, and upon sober deliberation,

damn your selves for fear of being abused, or called coward, for passing by an injury; you will draw at the least affront, and 'tis present death for a man, to throw a ly or a glasse of liquor in your face; and is it nothing you do daily the same to God, by giving him the ly, and pouring down your superfluous glasses? Are you so tender of your honour as rather to violate the laws of the great God, than the least *Punctilio* of it? and will he be carelesse of his? Do you dread the reproach of vain impotent men, & confidently encounter the anger of the omnipotent God? O stop in your career: do not so madly affect a full Pararell with *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, as to force him to destroy that remnant; which alone distinguiſhes our case (i). You durst, to gratifie a lust one hour, hazard lying eternally in fire unquenchable, and when your credit lies at stake, rather lose your life than that, though you go with reputation to Hell. Yet brave sou's have publick spirits; having now an opportunity, shew your selves true Lovers of your King, and Country; be not instrumentall to ruine them; hold your hands from pulling down vengeance as it were with Cart-ropes, though it be but untill this calamity be over-past. Seeing vice is so common, use it as you do your fashions, and leave it off (if for no better reason) for its being vulgar. Drink for your own health, and pray for the Kings. For thou shalt then be one of those Honourable Nobles that build the wast places,

that

that raise up the foundation of many generations; and thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in (k).

Amos 9. 11.
26.

True Christians Duty.

Piety and morality are the interest and peace of every single person; and, to be his care in his retired administration over himself: next, of families, and the oeconomy therein, the most likely, kindly, and compendious way for reformation: lastly, of great communities and the rulers over them, to whom is committed the custody of these two tables. When these are obliterated, or exaufterated by sin, God publishes them afresh from the dreadful mount, and engraven with his own finger in Judgments, that they may still be preserved in full force; he promulgates them with that Trumpet with which they were at first given; the sound of which having encreased louder and louder to this nation, should awaken us to receive them with a new Devotion, that we die not. And having invited the *Magistrate*, the *Minister*, the *Master*, the *Honor*, shall we now draw in the *Lawyer*, to sollicite the highest Court for relief? Shall we summon in the whole Colledge of *Physicians*, to prepare an Elixir out of their suppled eyes, rent hearts, extracted consciences to preserve at this exigence?

gence? Shall we call upon the *Trades men* to set up an exchange of prayers and tears, to negotiate and strike up a bargain and agreement between Heaven and us? Shall we send to our particular Counties to congregate together, or to send their faithfull substitute and proxy, their conversion, to associate for us with their humiliation and reformation?

True christi-
ans call'd
upon,

But because the most proper cure is that which is personall; and knowing both the malady, medicine, and how to prepare our antidote; what need we trouble others, when we are able if we will, *Christians*, to do the work *our selves*, and to be our own *Physician*. And O, that we would unanimously unite our endeavours to keep off Judgment, and to bring in fashion, solid and substantiall christianity. Come then my brethren, live up to the *Essential* and *fundamentall* Laws of religion; for so is the will of God, that with well doing you put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; haveing a good conscience, that whereas they speak evill of you, as of evill doers, they may be ashamed, that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ (*1*). Translate your *creed* into *practice*. By an exemplary reverence, redress the scandall of your former prophaneſs. *Consulte not* your *holy profession*, which while strangers contemplate, they will be apt with some confidence to conclude *Christendom* to be the *Goshen of the world*, not only for its *light*, but *immunity* from those locusts and caterpillars, swarmes of mean and fordid vices, which cover and devour the rest of the Earth.

1 Pet. 3.
25. & .3.
26.

Earth. But what tearms of wonder or grief can be sufficient enough to exprefs or bewail fo strange, and perverse degeneration; that *Chriftendome* fhould be as much *Heathen* as *America*; that the Light of the world fhould thus darken it; the falt of the Earth be the means of putrifying and corrupting it; that thofe who were by God drawn out from the heathen world, fhould fo outvie the Gentiles crimes, as if they had forfaken them only becaufe they were too innocent. So univerfall a depravation is there among us, that we have fcarce any thing left to diftinguifh us from the *moft barbarous people*, but our *better name* and *worfer vices*. We ridiculoufly contend for the title of the beft Chriftians, but fuch acts denominate us none at all; and make that f acred name ferve only to upbraid the contrariety of our praftice. That which was once the index to point out all morall and divine virtues, now marks out that part of the world where leaft of them refide. Yet, while we damn heathens for their morall virtues, we are fo ftupid, as to hope our felves to be faved by their worft vices. True praftick virtue, which once made fuch victorious falleys on the heathen world, is now baffled in its own quarters, beaten from its works, and driven to feek fhelter in obfcure corners; immures it felf in fome private breattis, and like an exil'd Prince, makes only fhift to live, when it fhould reign. 'Tis one of Satan's fubtilleft stratagems, to fill Chrift's camp thus, with his fouldiers; by whose inteltine treachery, he hath been more triumphant than by all his open af-

faults

and arrow'd Hostilities. 'Tis too evident how much Christianity loses, by the miscarriages and contests of its *professors*, which while they pretend to guard, do indeed invade her under her own colours. *Christian religion* hath allways had the hap to suffer, what was once the fate of the great *Aubour of it*, crucifixion between two thieves: *Irreligion* on one hand, & *contention* on the other; & while they two have been spitting their venome in her face, her professors have been behind her with thornes, and nailes, and spears; and the injury she hath received from *her professed enemies*, have been far exceeded by those of *her own house*. As long as the *lives of Christians* where the transcripts of their doctrine, they rendered it venerable to all; and gave a presumption, there was some thing more than humane in it, that could work such signall effects, and so transform men, as to make the adulterer chaste, the drunkard temperate, the covetous liberall, the contentious peaceable. So long as Christianity waged war only with forraign enemies, she never missed to be victorious; for while she was *persecuted*, she was *victorious*; they were enamoured on her when besmeared with bloud, courted her in the flames, bow'd to her on the Gibbit. It hath always been invulnerable against all darts, but what have been taken out of her own quiver, and could never have sunk to such a despicableness by any endeavours, but our own: of which the primitive times were pregnant testimonies: where all the most weighty cruelties, and bloody persecution

never

never made any breach in her, but she stood firm for all those batteries; and like an arch'd building, became more strong and compact by all that weight that was design'd to crush her. But, the *vices of professors* undermine her very foundation; and as much exceed the destructiveness of the most hostile assaults; as intestine treachery is more ruinous and fatal, than torraign violence. This sacred gourd, throve and flourished so long as watered with its martyrs blood; in absence of which, the Devill prepar'd those two wormes, contention and prophaneſs, that hath smote the root of it, and made its branches to fade and wither. The persecution of Christians being ended, the martyrdom of Christianity began when, they had done suffering for the faith, the faith began to suffer by them: and it hath lost much of its fame and repute in the world, ever since its face hath been soiled with the debauchery, and its garments torn with the divisions of its professors, expos'd to ruine and contempt. Ah me, what a slaughter of soules hath been in this Age? Whilst the wandring and only flock of Chrilt is divided into parties, the devouring wolfe lyes ready to destroy the scattered fold: this runs away, because the pipe playes an accustomed tune, because it must feed with a bended knee, because the shepherd wears a linnen garment, & differs the innocent fleeces with a scandalous brand; and that brings his Lambs to the fountain, and they wantonly wash (drown) themselves: one prefers this, another that, a
third

third neither, and the greater part none at all; but had rather have a freedome in the field, rages against folds, and leapes over them untill driven about with errors, drops into the *Roman* fold; so, what he foolishly feared, is hurried head-long into, by seeking to avoid. The wild-fire of passion, hath nigh consumed brotherly love; that fire is almost out, and scarce a spark of it appears. Many live as if they had been born on the mountaines of *Beiber* and baptis'd in the water of *Meribab*. Were mens reprobates, Gods reprobates, all the world would be damned. So, while he that is without heares each *Self* thunder out damnation against each other, he cannot but be startled at the danger of adhering to the wrong; and though that may a while excite his diligence, to discover the right; yet when he comes to that inquisition, he meets with so many polemick intricacies to intangle him, that after many turnes from one side to another, hee'l be apt to think, the onely clew to extricate himself out of this Labyrinth of many religions, is to abandon all. Nor can any take a more malicious and effectuall course to disgrace, reproach, and do Christianity the greatest despite and mischief than to *profess* it, and *live* contrary: It more discourages others from embracing than the highest charecter we can give of, can perswade them to it: And while we would gain them to become Christians, by telling them of our holy precepts and hopes, of an undehiled state, what a Holy God we serve, what a perfect pattern we imitate, what
a ho-

a holy Spirit guides, directs, strengthens, assists us. Their wicked lives who professe themselves Christians (and so to have supernaturall principles, to be Sanctified, washed, regenerate, born of God,) loudly proclaims that either 'tis our religion to sin, or that Christianity is a barren, unfruitfull, weak, powerlesse, ineffectuall thing, or we our selves secretly believe it to be a ly, that without holinesse we may see God; and Heaven, if there be any such place, is an inheritance among the un sanctified; that God is pleased with any thing, and glad of any company; so we cannot reasonably expect they should believe us, when they see we disbelieve our selves. A *Jew*, or *Turk* is not so great an enemy to the Crosse of Christ, as a *sensuall, earthly Christian* (m). 'Tis really on many accounts better such should abandon their profession, than to keep on a *Vizard* which should be for no other purpose, but to scare other men from religion. The *wicked lives* of *Christians* at this day, is one of the greatest obstacles of the Jews, Heathens, and progress of the Gospell, representing it in the world to to great disadvantage, that prejudiced persons mischief their own souls by others examples. Yet why will they tall and break their necks, because others tumble and break their shins? Doth Christian religion any way countenance, patronize, or rather severely condemn the sinfull practices of its professors? Is any Doctrine to holy (n)? Are all that professe it, loose and carelesse? Must the innocent

m Phil. 3.
18. &c.

n Ps. 19. 8.
Mat. 5. 48.

cent be condemned for the guilty? Do not many in temporall concerns act against their own belief, and though the prodigall knows his estate is ruining, yet will on, through his impetuous lusts, for want of due consideration? If you stay for a religion, which none that professe live contrary to, you must set up your ladder, and go to Heaven by your self. But 'tis not our *Printed Apologies* for Christianity, but our visible, unblameable lives, is the only way to remove the facall stumbling-block, and to make it look with so amiable a countenance as to invite others to it. This would carry so much *Majesty*, as to command reverence from the greatest enemies, and seeke our good works, to glorifie our Father which is in Heaven. But while we professe largely, and live at large, we make the prophane, atheistical, imbitter their spirits against it, inducing them to conclude all professors hypocrites, and religion a meer design and mockery, deceit and cosenage; so keeps them from that, thus made to stink in their nostrils, scorning and abhorring it as a baseness below them, thus to juggle and dissemble with the world; and to say, there's so much difference between that religion in your bibles and conversations, that either you are not evangelicall, or this is not Gospell. I tremble to think, God grant this day of blasphemy, be not laid to our charge. That which was designed to perfect and fill up the law, hath by the strange practice of those that live as if they profest Christianity,

stianity, meerly in spite, to defame it, at once obliterating both law and law-giver, out of mens minds. Feigned piety is the mother of prophanesse, and atheism; hence religion it self comes to be questioned and what is true, doubted to be so. And because the outward Habit displeases some, the very face of religion begins to be detested, flouted at, and put to an undeserved blush; and fears the whole world will be censured for hypocrisie; so hugs it self in its retired life and hermitage. The *wits* of our age give many a gird, sling many squib at it, for the disorderly actions of Christians; they have procured Christ many a taunt, and flout, put many a *mock-robe* upon him, many a Reed and Scepter into his hand, set many a Crown of thorns upon his head, calling him Lord, but revile and spit upon him. Thus is Christ wounded in the house of his friends, and hath more reproaches cast on him by those that professe his name, than by the loudest blasphemies of those that oppose it. There are men so irrationall, and unjust, that take notice of the better morals of Turks and infidels, not in reproach of our selves but our religion (than which none makes so much provision for a holy life (o)). And because we have so many *Lepers*, think *Abanah*, and *Euphrates* better than all the waters of *Israel*. Our very Religion partakes of the infamy of our lives is thought rather a *mystery of iniquity* than of *godliness*; for when those that have not opportunity to examine our faith, see the enormous-

o Tit. 2. 12.
12.

ness of our works, what should hinder them from measuring the master, by the disciple; it being scarce imaginable, that any one *Señ* of men, should so universally run counter to all the rules of their profession; for let any sober heathen, look upon *Christendom*, as it is at this day, weltering in the blood, not of martyrdom, but war, and is it possible for him to think it owns a Gospell of peace, or that those who perpetually do those outrages, they are unwilling to suffer, professe obedience to the Royall law, of, *Love thy neighbour as thy self*? Can he see the violences, and oppressions, the frauds and underminings, the busie *scrambling for Crowns*, and for little parcels of the earth, believe, we account our selves strangers and Pilgrims in it, and have laid up our treasure in Heaven? Can he observe the strange and almost universall distortion of speech, whereby it hath lost its native propriety of being interpreter of the mind, and under intelligible words so far exhibits the *Babell* of confusion, that no man understands anothers meaning, and can he imagine we have any such precept as *lye not one to another*, or penalty upon the infringer, as *exclusion from the new Jerusalem*? Shall he hear our God mentioned more frequently and earnestly in our imprecations, than our prayers, and every part of our crucified Saviour re-crucified in our horrid oaths, and not think that his second executioners bear him as little reverence as his first; or that he hath given no such command, as *Swear not at all*?

When

When he discerns *self-preservation* bowed to as the supreme law, can he ever dream of another so inconsistent obligation, as that of *taking up the Crosse*; or that suffering for righteousness sake, is one of our greatest felicities, when he sees us run so affrighted from it, that, no crime, perjury, rebellion, murder, is block enough in our way to stop our flight, when he sees how much of our business, is, first to excite, and then to cloy the flesh, to spur it on to riots, even beyond its own propensions, that the whole year is but one mad Carnivall, and we are voluptuous, not so much upon desire of appetite, as by way of exploit and bravery; can he possibly guesse our institution directs us to *beat down the body*, and interdicts us all *rioting, and drunkennesse, chambering, and wantonnesse, and all provisions for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*? Certainly when he sees a set of men, that have inhanc't the common humane pravity he will be apt to infer, their principles have taught them the improvement; and upon that supposal, he wanted not temptation to his option, that said, *Let my soul be with the Philosophers*. So hath Christianity been infinitely more oppress'd by those that fought for it, than that were in arms against it; breeding aversion and abhorrence of *this religion*, whose admirers are full of *bloud, rapine, &c.* nor do such attempts gain any thing to the cause, but the infamy of those, used to promote it. And now it amidst all our importunate pretences to piety, there be indeed any such thing among

us, me thinks it should give us some relenting, make us sadly consider to what a deplorable condition we have brought that very Religion on which we professe to hang all our hopes, our happinesse. And oh that our importunate *strifes* might be superseded, and our numberlesse mortall *enmities*, moulded into the one *noble emulation*, who shall fastest unravell his own mischiefs, and promote that peace he hath hitherto disturbed. That while many of our Spirituall combatants, in spite of daily repeated calls to peace, still pursue their hostility, we may shew more zeal to the obeying our Generall, than annoying our enemy; and may fight, not against single adversaries, but war it self, and contend against nothing but contentions. The atchievements of calm and sober counsells are infinitely preferrable before those of strength and power; especially here, where if we fight, we wound our brethren, but if we unite, we destroy our enemy, baffle, and circumvent Satans Master-stratagem; not only worst, but out wit him. Oh if possible retrieve the decays of Christianity, and repair the injuries you have done it, by bringing its precepts into your conversations, and avoiding the doing any thing that may arm or provoke others tongues against your profession, to which your personall faults will be imputed. To what a dismall, forlorn state have we brought that, which was designed to bring us to blis, far exceeding the barbarity of the brutish *Sodomites*; they would have

have violated the *messengers* of their *ruine*, but we those of our *safety*; and have not only neglected, but vilified and reproached the *embassie* sent us from Heaven, & instead of embracing that purity, and peace, it recommends to us, have done our part to make it forgotten that ever it was sent upon any such errand. And indeed, so it is like to be, if some Heroick piety revive not its memory, and teach us to record it, not so much in our *books* as *lives*: there only it will be universally legible, and appear to be, what it is in its own nature, *the power of God unto Salvation*. A Christian pretends not to have a better wit, a more piercing Judgment, but a better rule, more powerful arguments and incentives to be more holy, chaste, temperate, just, more master of his passions, more meek, kind, gentle, obliging, charitable, loving, mild, of a sweeter, peaceable temper, than others. Then will the world believe *Christianity* powerfull indeed, when they behold its *victories* written in the blood of our lusts, and our vices led in triumph, as the Trophies of its conquest; when they see our actions stamped with its sacred impressions, and can read its Precepts in its Professors practices. O save your selves from this untoward generation (*p*). Come out of her my ^{p Act. 2.} people, that you be not partakers of her sins, ^{40.} and that you receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities (*q*). Do you ^{q Rev. 18.} not know, that the Saints shall judge the ^{45.} world

* Heb. 11.
7.

* 2 Sam. 17.
14.

Mat. 18. 7.

* Mal. 3. 2.

world? How much more ought your lives to condemn it (r). O! let not them whom you must one day Judge, justly Judge you now. O! why will you by an ill example (s). shed the bloud of their souls for whom Christ shed his own, and be cruel to them, who have found Christ so kind to you? Shall those brought up in Scarlet, that wear Christs Livery (like the Courtiers of Heaven) in their conversation embrace the stinking dunghill of this worlds pleasure and profit. *Jerusalem* is a lighting with candles to search Hearts; now God is coming to purge his Gold, to prune his Vine; Professors look within you, and look about you. How can you who sin against so much light, resolution engagement encouragement,) abide the day of his coming? & stand when the Sun of righteousness appears; for he is like a Refiners fire, and like fullers sope (r). Ah Lord! what blushing will there be ere long? when thou shalt wash off the paint of our profession (which will not endure the water, or Sun) and thy followers wear their hearts in their faces? When they that have not the power, and life, shall wish they had not the form, and vizard of godlinesse, and cease to appear to be, what they really are not? 'Tis much more eligible to be an honest Heathen, or Devout Idolater, than a prophane Christian. How many see themselves more than Infidells? and that the Charter of Christianity hath served them for no other purpose, but to reprove them in the eternity of their pains for the exorbitance of their
their

their infamy. Hell is pav'd with hypocrites skulls, they fall deepest into misery, from the greatest advantages, and opportunities of being happy, have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers (v). There is one that accuses you, even Jesus in whom you trust. We sin at a greater, but not so cheap a rate as our forefathers: Our crimes are of a deeper dye, attended with sadder, blacker aggravations, and capable of more Judgment. Remember *Caspernaum's Doom*, and tremble. Weep not for heathens, weep for your selves; it shall be more tolerable for *Sodom* in the day of Judgment than for thee. Thou art inexcusable O man, whosoever thou art that Judgest, for wherein thou Judgest another, thou condemnest thy self; and thinkest thou this O man, that Judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the Judgment of God (w). The Evangelicall Covenant ^{or Mat. 24. 51.} allows no other priviledge to the sins of the most knowing Professors, but a preheminence in punishment, the being beaten with many stripes. The Son of righteousness, so long shining on the insincere, serves only to involve them, in that most dreadfull condemnation, which awaits those who love darknesse more than light. ^{or Rom. 2.}

But what can we expect, but that Christian religion, crumbled into so many minure fractions, should like dust be scattered, and irrecoverably dissipated. That while she is surrounded with

* Rev. 3. 5.

Assassines from all quaters, every one whereof with a wanton cruelty are ambitious to inflict new wounds, but that her present languishing should end in death. To preserve that sacred manuscript of Heaven, the Gospell, from being lost, or taken away, the way is to transcribe, and copy it out in your lives. That formidable Judgment of removing the candlestick (us'd by Christ as the most awakening menace, (x) is yet inhanced by doing it with our own hands. When men are come to that insensate obduration, that they court their plagues, become their own lictors, & make their extrinick punishment their choice, they are certainly too secure of that ruine they call for. And may we not fear it may prove Generall, and involve us all? That while so many cry out to be delivered from their Christianity, as their load and pressure; and so few express their dissent to that demand, God may in Judgment grant it, hearken to those that cry loudest, rescue his Gospell from our prophane and impious violations, and give it to others that may bring forth the fruit thereof. The fawning professions of the demure hypocrite, accelerate, and not avert this fate: He that makes the Golden scepter in Christ's hand, a Rod of Iron in his own; That thinks his *Saint-ship* Licenses him to all the severe censures, & the severer (because more effective) oppressions of others, is certainly to be lookt on, not only as a *Rebel*, but *Usurper*, and of all others, the highest provoker. He that tramples under foot the son of God, doth not so much violate him, as he that pretends

pretends to erect him a throne upon blood and rapine, perjury and sacrilege: nor, he that accounts the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, so much prophanes him, as he that uses it as a varnish to paint over his foulest lusts. There is no concord between Christ and *Belial*. And can we think he will be patient to be made subservient to his enemy, or suffer his Ark to be set for the *support*, which should be the *confusion* of *Dagon*? Will he, that so severely upbraides the *Hypocrisie* of the *Jews*, that stole, murdered, and committed adultery, and sware falsely, yet came and stood before him in his house (y)? con- Je. 7. 9.
 nive at it in Christians? Was it intollerable prophanation in them, to account his house *a den of robbers*, and shall we be permitted to make it *so*? They are sent to *Sbilo* to learn their own *destiny*, and sure, we are as like to find ours there too: to be deprived of those advantages we have so unworthily abus'd. We cannot but expect, that when he sees his *light* serve only to aid us the more subtly to contrive our deeds of darkness, he should with draw it, smite us with blindness like the *Sodomites*, whom he finds in such impure pursuits. By our nonconformity to it, we abjure the sovereignty of Christ, and really say, we will not have him to rule over us. And being thus deposed of his regall and directive power, we have reason to believe, he will dispise a meer titular Empire, not suffer the scepter of his Word to remain as an empty ceremony, among those, who pay it no reall obedience? To be again clothed with purple, crown'd and saluted

luted King, to advance, the triumph of his scorn and crucifixion? Be not deceived, God will not be mocked; nor always stand holding the candle to us, while we do the devil's drudgery. If we make no other use of the waters of life, but to bath and paddle in, we may expect to see them dry'd up, or turned into some other channell; and the Sun of righteousness no longer to shine upon those who only bask themselves in its rays, grow *Ethiops* from its neighbourhood, and will not work by its light. A judgment so black and dismall, that our liberty, peace and plenty go with our means of salvation. When with our guilt, we have *Exerciſt* the Gospel from among us, and dispossess our selves of it; it will not depart without horrible rendings, tearings, tortoring; nor give over struggling in its passage, till left us dying and weltering in our own blood. O then! for the Gospel, the nation, your own, and posterities sake, be prevailed with, to a speedy reformation of your lives. Seriously ponder the excellency of that holy vocation to which you are called, and whether you have walked worthy of it (2). Diligently sift out the fallacies and delusions of Satan and your own hearts, as the particulars, so the causes of your miscarriages; not for acquaintance with those malefactors, but for their punishment, and our security. Be ingaged in an earnest prosecution of those delinquents you have impeacht, and in as earnest endeavours to repair the mischiefs they have wrought, make no delay to rescue your selves from their treacheries.

* Ep. 4. 1.

cheries. Manfully break those *wishes* and cords which are too weak to hold any that will but in earnest remember he is a *Nazarite*, a person consecrated to God. Resolutely resist the insidious carresses of those *Dalilah's*, which would deliver, not your *selves* only, but the *Ark* to the *Philistines*. Nor be content with your own single escape, but propagate the deliverance to as many as you can. Blazon and stigmatize those impostors; to conceal them is a combining with them. Warn and caution others against those juggling artifices, by which your selves were intrapped; make your own escape a sea-mark for securing the course of other passengers; when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. A piece of this fraternal charity, we all owe to every particular soul, to whom we have opportunity to dispence it; and the only way to take off that scandal we have brought upon religion; which will no more be removed by a few single, private reformations, than it was contracted by their irregularities. There must be combinations, and publick confederacies in *virtue*, to *ballance* and *counterpoise* those of *vice*, or she will never recover that pristine honour which she acquired, by the *Generall* piety of her professors; when there was such an abhorrence of all that was ill, that a *vitious person* was look'd on as a kind of *monster* or prodigy, and like a putrified member cut off, as being not only dangerous but *noisom* to the body. But alas, the *Church* is now made up of such, as she then would have cast out: And, 'tis as remarkable to find

find a *good Christian*, as there, a *bad*. Every thing is estimated, not according to its rare and casuall, but frequent usuall operations. Christianity hath lost as much in its repute, as it appears to have done in its efficacies: nor will there be any way of repairing it, till we be Generally rendred as malleable to its impressions, that our lives may attest its force and energy. To suppress the operations of our religion, is indeed to extinguish it. And O that men would Generally lay to Heart, the sin and infamy of being promoters of publick ruine! and quench that fire with their tears, their sins have kindled. That the fastings and prayers, the sighs and groans of the *primitive Christians*, may supplant the prophane Luxuries, the carnall jollities of the *modern*. That sackcloth and ashes may become the universal mode, the only fashionable dress among us. But the less there is of this Generall reformation, the more Jealously ought every *single person* to look on himself, lest he be one that obstruct it, by staying till it be a *fashion*, but neglect to contribute *his part*, to the *making* it so. O why should we not all emulously contend who should first put off that ugly vizard we have put upon our religion, and restore it to its native form? men are willing to discourage themselves from the attempt; and with an unseasonable modesty reflect, what a *nothing* one man is to so many millions: When alas, all that vast empire *Vice* hath got in the world, is founded in the pravitie of single persons, and would certainly be ruined by their reformation.

reformation. He who considers himself but as *One*, should not suffer himself to grow into lesse, to fall from that Unite to a Cypher, by permitting sloath or cowardice to enfeeble, and emasculate him; but recollect his spirits, actuate all his strength, and therefore be sure to do his utmost, because that utmost is but little. What wonders are industry and resolution able to effect; and a single courage exerted, hath often without Romance overcome Giantly difficulties. 'Tis a prejudice is cast upou virtue, by the pusillanimity of those that like but dare not *abes* her: when most commit all impieties daringly and openly, and those few that mourn for it, do it but in secret; the example of the one is contagious, but the other hath no means to defuse it self. Would Christians stoutly own Duty, and not follow Christ afar off, they might yet hope to make a party, and gather ground in the world. And how noble an attempt were this, thus to conquer Satan in his highest Triumph, and recover a lost field? Methinks those who have any warmth of piety glowing within them; may easily thus improve it into a flame, by being, not only devout to God, but zealous toward men: endeavouring by all prudent means to recover them out of the snares of the Devill; among which are none more intangling than the creditableness and repute of customary vices. Set your selves especially against that overgrown covering and Ornament, those locks wherein its great, its *Sampson* strength lyes; and strive to render it as concerned,

contemned, as it is base. To which purpose is nothing so apt, as the exalting its competitor, affecting virtue out of the Dungeon, that darknesse, and obscurity wherein it hath long lain forgotten, and by making it illustriously visible in your own practices, put it into the possibility of attracting others, there only it appears in its true splendor: They are but dead colours the sublimest speculations can put on it: He that will draw it to the life, must imprint it upon his own.

The true
Christian
in evil

And thus every pious person may, nay, ought to be a *Noah*, a Preacher of righteousness; and if it be his fortune to have as imperishable an auditory, if he cannot avert the deluge, it will be yet the providing himself an Ark; the delivering, yea, advancing his own soul, if he cannot benefit other mens: Nay, this being a *Noah* may qualifie him to be a *Moses*, give him such an *interest* with Heaven, that he may be fit to stand in the gap, to be an intercessor and mediator for a provoking people. He so mourns for the sins of others, that he will hardly be taken off, while others mourn not for their own. Hath learnt to deny his private interest for the publick good; *Moses* would not cease praying for *Israel*, to be made great upon their ruines. He abhors the baseness of serving himself on the evil of the times; by seeking a private gain, by that which will turn to the publick losse, and of fearing to adventure a private losse, for that which may turn

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to the publick gain. His zeal is mixed with love and meeknesse, to melt, not consume his enemy; apter to pour out his own blood a Sacrifice for truth, than that of gainayers; far from those that think to propagate religion by arms not only lawfull but meritorious; and in order to planting it in a nation, mellow the soyl with the blood of the inhabitants. The common *errablenesse* of mankind urges in him commiseration to the Seduced, to look gently upon others, (on an involuntary error, rather as the disease, than crime of the person), as to reflect impartially upon himself. He considers how possible it is, that even while we condemn others, we may indeed be in the wrong, and then, all the invectives we make at their *supposed* errors, fall back with a rebounded force upon our own *reall* ones (*a*). Those univer- Gal. 6. 1. sal truths to which all parties assent, are the clearest, for their evidence, and most important for their consequence; so should be a more enforcing motive to unite, than the more *singular opinions* (perhaps fancies) of some men can be to discord, would men as nicely observe the principles of agreement between dissenting parties; and with as much art and care, seek to dilate and spread them, why might not they, as much overwhelm our differences, as they have been overwhelmed by them. Hypocrites are more zealous and earnest for a *Ceremony*, than for the *Sabbath*; reverence the *Creed*, but make no conscience of the *Commandments*. But a true Christian contends more for the weightier

weightier things of religion; than for the lesser, and is charitably affected to the favourable censures of all usages that are meerey indifferent. Prudence often requires as much compliance without weak brethren as is allowed by *innocence*. In what he cannot comply with the depraved customes of those among whom, without disobeying him for whom, he lives; or doing what would derogate from the dignity of a person related to such a Master, whose servant he is, he will lesse consider what may be thought of him by a multitude, than what account he is to render to him, who hath forbid him to follow a multitude to do evill. And as he knows his reward will be much lesse than he reckons upon, if it were a thing to be received on earth, not in Heaven; so how strange and unfashionable soever his conformity to his own Sovereign may appear, he chooseth rather to displease him, than God, and acts as both seeing and being seen of him that is invisible. If sin present himself as his Protector from a temporall calamity, reason tells him the profer is insidious; It exposes him to that which is infinitely more, than what it pretends to save him from, in respect both of guilt and punishment; what a cheat is it to keep me out of the Dungeon, and send me to the bottomlesse pit? To save me from a temporall fire, and thereby mark me out as fewel for eternall flames? To take me out of their hands who can kill the body, to put me into his, who can destroy both soul and body in Hell? 'Tis folly to wallow

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in the mire, though it were safe, much lesse when it is full of Asps, and Vipers, which will infallibly sting me to death. He eyes both the ugliness of sin, and the affrightfull, dismall blaze of those unquenchable flames it kindles. He refrains his tongue from evill, seeks peace and pursues promoting good will among men, healing differences, abating animosities, preferring the publick quiet, before his own private ends; Censures not, reviles, nor murmurs against others, for *that* helps not to better any condition, but rather encreases the evill and discontent of it; especially if directed against our *Governours*; men in private stations can't understand the temptations and difficulties great persons contest with, therefore no fit Judges of their actions; By maligning them, we weaken their hands, and undermine that power, whereby order is to be preserved, & introduces confusion, the worst kind of evils any times are capable of: One tongue set on fire of Hell, may set on fire the whole course of nature (b) the frame and compages of humane Societies, and dissolve those bonds, whereby men are to be united in an orderly association: Even those most prone to discontent, could not with safety sleep or wake, did not the wing of Government hover over them: Were the King a Nero, St. Paul would charge us *not to resist*, and would charge *resistance* with *damnation* (c). The peoples sin may cause God to infatuate their Princes Counsel, or leave him to commit such crimes, for which he may

N

punish

Jam. 3. 6.

Rom. 13.

2.

d Il. 3. 1.
&c.

e 2 Pet. 3.
17.

f Ph. 2. 15.

g Jos. 24. 15.

punish the nation, and he not deserve to govern, but they not deserve a better Governour (*d*). He redeems the time because the days are evil; the fire of his zeal is kindled by an *Antiperistasis*, and burns hottest in coldest seasons; as Spring water warmest in frosty weather. He takes Antidotes in an infectious air, in common contagion, beware lest ye being also led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness (*e*). Follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes, not for his fleece, but for his blood, when so few go after him, so many stand still, and most go backward; Apostates are the Devils windfalls, death blows them into Hell. In the darkest night the Firmament of his soul is deck't and bespangled in greatest lustre, and then most careful to hang out his light, to stir up, and live in the exercise of his most excellent *graces*, especially those that stand in opposition to the reigning usages of the age; that he may diminish the darkness of an evil generation, he shines as a light in it (*f*); is patient among offensive neighbours, chaste among lascivious, sober among Epicures, religious in *Sodom*, upright when the whole earth is corrupted: their worldliness quickens his Heavenliness, their Atheism his belief in God, their lukewarmness his circumspect zeal and strictness (*g*); Is as active for God, as others are for the world; as truly content with his condition as others are covetous and oppressive, as faithful as others are false; as pious as others are profane; as
much

much excels in Christian moderation, Humility, as others in cruelty, censoriousnesse, pride. His life is an illustrious Testimony for Christ and his cause against a wicked world. He fears not the reputation of *singularity*, but had rather go himself alone to Heaven, than to Hell in a crowd of Company. In an Epidemick disease, every one looks out for Antidotes for his own peculiar, and doth not acquiesce in that silly confidence, he shall do as well as others: Can numbers outface Damnation? Do men hope that by going in troops to Hell, They shall master the native inhabitants, subdue those Legions of tormentors, and become Conquerors instead of sufferers? He appears in defence of Gods word and ways, with more courage, resolution, and boldnesse, than others in opposing or pleading against them. 'Tis the wisest, safest course to take the strongest side; greater is he that is with us, than they that are with them: When Gods cause and glory suffers, he that is not for God is against him, and he that gathers not with him, scatters abroad; so, by fearing a lesser danger, falls into a greater; to save his cloaths, breaks his neck. He is not ashamed of his profession, and dare be religious when it exposes to danger, when nothing is so hard and chargeable to keep as a good conscience; and he that departs from evil, makes himself a prey, and is accounted mad for his pains. His truly generous spirit, not only surmounts the difficulties that attend him, but is raised by them; and turns them in-

to steps to glory. That boysterous breath the prophane send forth to deride and cross this skiltull *Pilot* in his intended voyage, by the right composing of his sails, he makes that his greatest furtherance and advantage, which was intended for his ruine. He can with any name, and with any wind go to Heaven, a harbour where he is sure to meet with his name written in the book of life. He cannot think that any debasement of his spirit, which carries him out upon so *High* and *Noble* achievements, but an happiness to go into Heaven, though through a red Sea, and a rude wilderness: Whilest others (alas) feed so greedily upon the Quails, that they never *say grace*, but in a murmuring that they have not more and better cheer; he feeds more upon his hopes, than his enjoyments, & blesses his God for both. He converts the peoples froth into Pearl; and will not buy their good word, with the losse of his Lords, *well done good and faithfull servant*. He sticks close to Christ when it is disgracefull or death to wear his collours, and rejoices he is counted worthy to suffer shame for his name (*b*). What the Church loses in the number of formall Professors, is abundantly made up in the vigorous graces of reall Saints. He will let go all his earthly preferment, rather than lose his conscience, accounting the enjoyment of what he principally loves, enough to recompense him for all he hath been constrained to part with in pursueing it: That servant is worthy to faint, that holds it not a sufficient encouragement

b Act. 5.
41.

ment to see the evident proofs of his Masters favour: Let *Michal* revile his dancing before the *Ark*, his patience stops all mouths and purchases Crowns. If no cause to blush for Heaven, why should we for *grace*? What shall we beadasht at, serving the only potentate, and originall of all excellencies? Shamefastness is for them, in whose coat of arms they may well put in the *Devils cloven-foot*; virtue is a thousand escutcheons. He abhors the baseness of being baffled out of a truth or virtue: A good cause divests sufferings (in what dresse soever they appear) of their dreadful shap; pulls off the ugly vizard; and shews us a beauty that lay there concealed; wise men may be argued out of a religion they own, none but fools and mad men will be drol'd out of it; sooner laugh'd out of their estate, than out of their hopes of eternall happiness. He prizes his Masters honour more than his own interest: having fixed his end, he takes his way as he finds it; all weather is fair to a willing mind. 'Tis indifferent to him whether he be consumed by Martyrdom, or religious employment, or what manner of death he shall die: If he prize any thing in the world, as his own, 'tis that he hath something to esteem as nothing for Christ. Desire of gain or glory, fear of disgrace or danger, induces not him to pernicious practices; a man can never be undone by the greatest losse he can sustain, for preserving an interest in Gods love and favour. He is rich and happy, whose portion is God, and inheritance Heaven, how

great soever his sufferings and losses, while others with their greatest worldly gain or glory are poor and miserable. And yet, here, where the prize is so rich, the terms so easie, the acquell so certain, the detriment of refusing it so inestimable, how many insignificant combatants are there in the Christian camp that only lend their name to fill up the *muster-roule*, but never dream of going upon service? If we fight not manfully under our Saviours banner against sin, the world, and the Devill, 'tis not materiall what profession we make; we are the same desertors whether we stay in our own camp, or run over to the enemies, throw away our arms, or not use them, renounce our Christian faith, or not improve it. Sloath is as mischievous in war as treachery or cowardise. And, he that keeps his sword in the sheath, is as formidable an enemy, as he that brings none into the field. Christianity is our badge or cognizance of the cause and generall we fight for; to engage us to all the obedience, fidelity and constancy of Resolute souldiers. They that please not themselves with the empty title, but penetrate the full purport and significancie of their Christianity, will find themselves assaulted by such force of reason, that they must be either very ill Logicians, or very good Christians; & they that look on the eternall things *that are not seen*, will through those opticks exactly discern the vanity and inconsiderableness of all that is *visible*, and temporary; and so (while others unworthily desert that cause they find chargeable to main-
main.

maintain, and chuse the way of the wicked, whose prosperity they envy) will be equally unmoved with the terrors or allurements of the world, and neither frightened nor flattered off their duty. He would not be saved alone, but is still provoking and winning over others to a love of the truth. When 'tis customary to speak more of persons, than things; and reckoned a peice of ingenuity to raise or improve a story, to wound the fame of an enemy, or play with the reputation of a friend: when blasphemous hypocrites words are stout against God, then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another (i) i Mal. 3. 16 by way of counsell & encouragment in the wayes of God; that the sincerity and eminency of their piety, may be sufficient to overwhelm the contrary perverseness. He hath as many chaines to oblige men to his maker, as he hath given him means of well doing. He perfumes every place with his presence, and 'tis hard for any to come from him, no whitt holier than he went. While others are drawing in partners of their Damnation, he is pulling them out of the fire: even permission in those things we might remedy, makes us no less actors than consent; some kill as much by looking on, as others by smiting: whosoever gives the blow, the murder may be ours: 'tis all one, to hold the sack, and to fill it: we are guilty of all the evill we might have hindered. Foolish Christians, instead of vindicating the truth, think it forsooth, discretion and moderation, with a complying silence, and perhaps a smile to boot, tacitly to approve and strike in with the scoffer, and so go sharer both

in the *mirth*, and *guilt* of his *prophane jests*. He studiously contrives how he may promote his acquaintances advantage, not only outward and secular but inward and spirituall; using all friendly stratagems to recommend and endear vertue to him: He makes his *kindness* the vehicle wherein the more gratefully to administer whatsoever is most wholesome, even reproofs when they appear so; and yet, by taking his own turn in being the *patient*, evinces 'tis no assuming humour that creates him a *Physician*. He feels such an unutterable complacency in rescuing any man by seasonable advice from a course of sin, that he finds he is kind to himself as well as the other; and hath no temptation to think himself unprofitably imploy'd, though that were to be his only reward. He becomes a *Saviour* without a cross; and payes but a little breath for that, which exhausted the blood of *his own*. He that by a strict and exemplary conversation sets himself up a Land-mark, to direct men in this turbulent, and dangerous sea, though his light goes forth to others, the warmth and cherishing heat of it remains in his own breast. What cheerful exulting reflections, may he make upon himself, that can make good Saint Paul's protestation, *I am pure from the blood of all men* (k): That he hath not by any scandalous example insnared any soul; but by illustrious acts of virtue, so adorn'd his Christian profession, as to draw in proselites to the obedience of Christ: That hath made it his business to stand in the gap, not only by his

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intercessions with God against the plagues, but by *his endeavours with men* against the sins of the nation; and by a steady opposing himself against the inundation of prophaneſs and licentiousneſs, hath invited others to give ſome ſtop to thoſe impure torrents. He that aſpires to no more than a private innocence, is only on the *deſenſive part*, ſtands upon his guard againſt *Satan*: but he that aimeth at publick reſormations, maintains an *invaſive war* againſt *him*, and ſo more ſhakes his kingdome: The reducing any ſinner is the diſpoſſeſſing him of ſo much of his uſurpt territory, and weakens his empire in the world. But alas, while we ſhould awaken others, we ſleep our ſelves: While we ſhould give cordials, to uphold others, we faint, we fall our ſelves. *Chriſtian*, hath Chriſt caſt his cloak of Love over thee, and ſaid unto thee Live, and wilt thou not pity thoſe that lye dead in their blood? O were the neglect and abuſe of religion lookt on as a common injury, which every one is concern'd to vindicate; were there ſuch a combination in order to the nations happineſs; would every *Governour* ſeriously mind his charge, every *man* his brother, every *Chriſtian* his particular duty, how much might it contribute to the *general good*? How ſoon are the ſoul ſtreets of a great City made clean, by every mans ſweeping his own dore. Evill men make evill times, they are made good by every mans mending one: No ſuch way of being a *publick benefactor*, as carefull endeavours to make the times we live in, better for us. For the *Kingdom's welfare*, it lyes upon each

each particular person, to put out, and faithfully improve his little stock to the publick banke, doing some extraordinary worship to God, with a carefull circumspection against whatsoever hath any tendency to augment the sins and sufferings of the times. If the foot be pinched, the back bends, the head bowes down, the eye looks, the hand stirs, the tongue calls for aid, the whole man is in pain, & labours for redress: being members of the same body, we pray for our selves in praying for others: Then may we rest *satisfied*, when conscience tells us we have neglected no meanes for redressing our miseries; but may look for *amendment* or *patience* by the personal performance of our duty: we shall procure to our selves at least the great benefit that would accrue to the nation, by a Generall reformation: either the affliction shall be kept or taken off thee, or laid on in so much mercy, that thy self shall bless God for it; whereas the contrary may cost thy temporall or eternal ruine. And though the distribution of rewards and punishments properly belong to those in authority, yet there is one sort of them in the power of private persons i. e. Honour and contempt; every man being obliged to honour them that fear the Lord, and to cast contempt upon those, that would cast contempt upon religion; which if well apply'd, might prove of great efficacy: Were prophane persons used as the lepers under the Law, would men nauseate their company, and avoid all kind of conversation with them, as vile infectious mischievous persons, this might be one good meanes to work

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in them some kind of shame and modesty, when they shall see themselves despised and abandon'd by all sober men.

And now, why should not every one be ambitious by all means to make *one* in this so *pious* & *confederacy*? and resolve most studiously to endeavour the composing our discords, and supporting piety: in which he may borrow something of instruction even from his own guilt, and copy out his former industry to this better purpose. But among us are so many humorous and vitious; such a complicated disease of bad opinions, and such a cachexie of evil lives, some half sighted architects, who magnifie our virtues, but can neither see errors, nor foresee dangers; other Earthly hearts, hid among the stuff (*1*), so busied about their worldly designs, as they have no leasure to mind, or
 propension to be intent upon this solemn subject: and notwithstanding the common safety of ship wrack, that we must sink or swim together, yet in this storm, most passengers abandon or disregard the ship of Church and State, to save themselves in the cockboat of their own fortunes (*m*) that we despair to find the generallity apprehensive of disease or cure. 'Tis a singular work, and must be ingaged by singular agents, such as are truly religious, that have the *Sins* of the nation smarting in their hearts, and the *safety* of it Ecchoing in their eares; that have the most conscience to cure sin, and the most remorse to reconcile an offended God: whose
 hearts

To regard
 Gods dis-
 pleasure.

11 Gal. 1. 14.
 32.

Ac. 27.
 30.

hearts are knit to the nation, and whose tongues
 soliciting for it: That weep over our sins, and
 would even sacrifice themselves in expiatory du-
 ties to prevent Judgment. O *Christians*, God
 takes special notice how we behave our selves,
 and comport with his *dispensations* of *mercy* or
Judgment. He expects when extraordinary in
 his *providences*, that we be so in seeking him.
 Because they regard not the work of the Lord,
 nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy
 them, and not build them up (n). Trees of
 righteousness, of Gods own planting, bring forth
 their fruit in their season (o); They carry *sutable*
spirits under his *various aëlings*; and shift their
 failes according to the several winds, whether
 North or South that blowes upon their garden,
 that the spices thereof may flow forth. When
 the Lord comes out of his place to punish the in-
 habitants of the Earth for their iniquities (p),
 'Tis not manners for his servants to sit still; they
 must arise and prepare to meet him (q). 'Tis our
 grand, important duty, when *Judgments* are felt
 or feared, to be sensible of and sorrowful under
 them: when he was come nigh, he beheld the
 city and wept over it (r). When he Eclipses
 and over-clouds the day, he expects we put on
 our *mourning garments*; and be upon our knees
 (in the lowest resentment) when he lifts up his
 hand to strike, as a *sutable* posture to keep off
 the storm of his wrath now gathering against
 us. 'Tis high time to betake our selves to our *def-*
ensive armes, when the Lord of hosts is mar-
 ching against us: And because I will do thus un-

• Ps. 28. 5.

• Ps. 1. 3.

• Is. 26. 21.

• Am. 4. 12.

• Lu. 19. 41.

to thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel (s). He smartly, severely resents that most provoking sin, a *stupid insensibleness & security under Judgment*, as being a slighting and contemning of his power, and a dishonourable reflection upon his wise management of humane affairs; as if the methods of his providence were not worth taking notice of; that the ship drove at random, and things came by hap hazard; Wo unto them that are at ease in *Sion* (t); drowned in sense, & now lye sleeping, unconcerned, at the signs of Gods wrath. The very *Romans* severely punished one, that shewed himself out at a window, with a Garland on his head in the time of war, when it went ill with the common wealth. Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in the same day, he shall be cut off from among his people: for it is a day of attonement, to make an attonement for you, before the Lord your God (v). Shall the Lyon roar, and shall not the beasts of the Forrest tremble? Fear ye not me? saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence (w)? What not dread such a God as I am? Will not my greatnesse nor displeasure make you quake and stand in awe? Are ye so sottish, as not to be startled at the voice of the Lord that shaketh the wilderness (x)? Will not the apprehension of my approach enforce you to stir? Tremble thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of *Jacob* (y): Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, but they shall see and be ashamed (z). O! who shall not fear thee O Lord, and worship before

Lev. 28. 29.

Is. 5. 22.

Ps. 19. 8.

Ps. 114. 7.

Is. 26. 11.

fore thee? For thy Judgments are made manifest (a). Tremble ye women that are at ease,
 a Rev. 18. 4. be troubled ye carelesse ones, strip ye, make ye
 bare, gird Sack-cloth upon your loins (b).
 b Il. 32. 11. Sigh ye Sons of men with the breaking of your
 Loins, and with bitterness cry and howl and
 c Ex. 21. 5. smite upon your thigh (c); be afflicted and
 12. mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned
 to mourning, and your joy to heaviness;
 d Ja. 4. 9. humble your selves in the sight of the Lord,
 20. that he may lift us up (d); Others sins unmour-
 ned for, become ours. O wo unto our hard-
 ned jolly Professors! O shall not your hearts
 be broken, for and from sin, that hath incensed
 God against the land of your nativity? Can
 you retire from the world, and seriously con-
 sider the prints of his displeasure, and remain
 impenitent? Is it nothing to you that God
 hath these many years been withdrawing from
 his Sanctuary in *England*? That your Mini-
 sters after all their labours, have had miscar-
 rying wombs and dry breasts? That so seldom
 any are under the pangs of the new birth?
 and so few added to the Church that shall be sa-
 ved? That God calls aside so many of his Am-
 bassadours? That there is such a spirit of division
 in the Land? That he hath been so long con-
 tending with us by the Sword, by Pestilence,
 and by Fire? The joy of our heart is ceased,
 our dance is turned into mourning; the Crown
 is fallen from our head; wo unto us that we
 have sinned; For this are our hearts faint, for
 e La. 5. 15. &c. these things are our eyes dim (e). How un-
 reasonable

reasonable are earthly prosecutions in this day of wrath? Thus saith the Lord, behold that which I have built, I will break down, and that which I have planted, I will pluck up, even this whole land; and seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not; for behold I will bring evill upon all flesh (f); Is this as *Je. 45. 2* time to walk with out-stretched necks, and wanton eyes? to be vain and frothy, careless and stupid, carnall and immerfed in the world? to receive money and garments, and Olive-yards, and Vineyards, and sheep, and Oxen, and Men-servants, and Maid-servants? The sins therefore of the nation, shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever (g). If the foundation *g. 2 King 9. 26. 27.* be destroyed, what can the righteous do? Why, fast and pray, for the Lord is in his Holy Temple, the Lords Throne is in Heaven (b). *b. Ps. 11. 3.* O! would every one that contributed to the ascending, be as industrious to the appeasing Gods wrath, would all that have brought their *Fire-brands*, bring also their *Tears* to quench it; as there would be no dry eyes in the nation at present, so might it prevent as great a *generality* of *weeping ones* for the future. But who (unlesse awakened by his personall concerns) seems at all to startle at the noise of publick ruine? What sign of remorse? What vanity, nay what vice have we substracted upon the sense of Gods anger? What nicety in Cloaths or Diet have we cut off, in sympathy with the nakednesse and Hunger of our afflicted brethren? Does not the unreasonable jollity
of

of too many among us, look as if we triumphed in their miseries, found musick in the discordant sounds of their groans and our own laughter? Emulating that infamous barbarity of *Nero*, who played while *Rome* burnt. 'Tis a kind of impious Solycism, to revell under the menace of *Judgment*. Thus saith the Lord, a Sword is sharpened, and also furbished; it is sharpened to make a sore slaughter; it is furbished, that it may glitter; should we then make merry (i)? With how much more indignation must he resent our perverse contumelious behaviour; against whom he hath not only prepared but used his Sword; and are not only under the threats, but actuall execution of his vengeance? This is interpretatively to prompt him to yet sharper inflictions, by shewing him that these have not edge enough to penetrate us. And in that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with Sack-cloth; and behold Joy and Gladness, slaying Oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die; and it was revealed in mine ear by the Lord of Hosts, surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die, saith the Lord of Hosts (k).

Ex. 21. 9.
29.
Is. 22. 13.
23.

Every one hath brought a *Faggot* to encrease the common flame, therefore ought his *Bucket* to quench it; but so few do, with how much more vigour and resolution should they besiege them-

themselves. *England*, for many generations hath had in a succession a number of *precious ones*, who by a keeping close with God, unspotted from the times, were the *Atlas's* of their severall ages, and found favour of God; to beg the life of this nation, when ready to be turned off: when wrath rushing in at the breach its sins (as ordinances) had battered down in the fence and wall of safety that was round about it, have slept in, stood before him, and stopt his entrance (1). Unhappy will the day of your birth be called, if you now coming in their room, should by degenerating from the power of godliness, and earnest endeavours cut the bank, which was their chief care to keep up, and let in an over-flowing desolating judgment. Unworthy that Heir of his Birth and Patrimony, who prodigally looses that estate, which, by the care and providence of his Ancestors, was, through many descents, at last transmitted to him, but together with the honour of the Family, thus unhappily ends in him. *Luther* foreseeing a black cloud of judgment hanging over *Germany*, told his friends he would do his best to keep it from falling in his days, yea, he believed it should not; but when I am gone (saith he) let them that come after me look to it. God uses rather to spare the offendour, than strike the intercessor; and now seems doubtful whether to destroy for many wicked, or save for the sake of a few righteous. And O Christian! hast thou not often said, this nation must suffer, and that the end of all will be dis-

1 Pt. 106.
22.30.

mall? And dost thou not fear it? Or fear it, & not stand up to save it? O! that thou hadst but as much prevention, as thou hast Judgment, or as much conscience, as thou hast a presaging spirit. That thou wert but as true a Saint, as thou wouldst seem to be a Prophet. Can you foretell, but remedy nothing? And foresee perils, yet put to the venture whether you escape or be ensnared in them? Do you dread charging plagues and disregard challenging sins? Do your ears glow, yet suspect no bad news? Do you seem to see nothing but Rods, Razors, Yokes, and Fetters, yet so blind that you cannot see the violating of God's laws? Doth every mechanick talk of the danger of times, and not you cry out of those execrable things which are ready to make the land an execration? Can you dread vengeance with impenitency? And reflect your ruine with stony Hearts? Feel malignant humours rising without taking a purge? And fear sinking, without pumping out the water? You are then rather inquisitors of dangers, than interpreters of them. Your eyes are open, your ears listening, and your hearts asleep. You are fearfull yet regardless. Your own predictions, nor convictions, will make you look inward. You are appalled at Gods Judgments, yet snuff them away, as if the angry and arming God would never smite. You see him displeased without striving to pacify him; and take notice of the sadness of the times, and receive the bruit of impending miseries, and dispose not your selves

to prevent it. God, you say, threatens; but do you believe him? He moves from his seat, do you arise from yours? He puts on Justice like a Cloak, do you cast away your Robes? He is ready to rend your garments from your backs, do you put on Sackcloth? He is blowing up his coales to burn against *Jacob*, do you sit in ashes? He's calling in variety of Judgments to plague, do you call in Citizens and others to pacify? He's resolved upon dismall things, do you do memorable ones? He frowns, do you weep? He is setting your sins in order before you, do you confess them? He is righting himself for injuries, do you make reparation? He is upon the point of confounding mightily, do you cry mightily? His feet is turning into the visiting way, do you turn every one from his evill way? His hand is laying hold on Judgment, do you purge your selves from the violence of your Hands? O! come ye *true mourners in Sion*.

In the consciences of your own wants and infirmities, spend your main censures upon your selves. Effectually work your hearts to a sound Humiliation for your own sins, which contribute to our publick stock of miseries. Though every one is not bound to say, he hath deserved those Judgments above all others; yet he must, that his sin hath deserved any Judgment, that can befall him; and that what every man is liable to, God may in Justice pick out whom he please, to make him an example of it. Every inha-

To spend their main censures upon themselves.

bitant is strictly and impartially to examine himself, and reflect upon the plague of his own heart, what 'tis in him particularly God aims at. How he hath contributed towards kindling his anger; and accordingly, speedily to apply himself to him: doing his utmost to make an atonement. Hide nothing from him; from the publick guilt who can say his heart is clean? In thy skirt is found the blood of the nation; yet thou saist because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me: behold I will plead with thee, because thou saist I have not sinned

^m Je. 2. 34. (m). How many can find out the filth of the whole nation, rather than the dunghill at their own doors? And reckon up all the vices of the times, rather than their personal? They can consider their proper rights, but not their proper sins. This clapped book hath not been opened, to view every leaf; nor this depth of iniquity searcht to the bottom this many years. They had rather *teach* the world repentance than *practise* it: And cleanse the age, than purge themselves. To bring forth the prisoners in chains, & accuse them at the bar, they leave this to the last Tribunall. We *arraign* only other mens sins, and leave our own out of the *Inditement*. We charge our mortall wounds and ruines upon immediate weapons and instruments; not considering they were wielded and whetted by the more generall impieties, from whence they borrowed their destructive power. To transfer the guilt here, is but the artifice of slaying *Uriah* with the Sword of the children of *Am-*

^m Je. 2. 34.
35.

mon; which acquits not *David* from being his murderer. Here lies the carcase of a poor bleeding nation; which of us can say, our hands have not shed this blood, neither hath our eyes seen it (*n*)? Instead of accusing others as *Apostates to truth*, condemn your selves as *enemies to peace*. Our *lusts* though they are confessedly the *Burthen* among us, have by I know not what fascination so endeared themselves, that we retain them in spite of all their appendent mischiefs; cherish and foster them under the covert of religion. The lesse capable you are of washing your hands in *innocency*, the greater needd to wash them in *penitency*. The office of the avenger of blood devolves on you; drag out the criminals which have taken Sanctuary in your own breasts, as in a City of refuge, saying, *is here all?* & hew them in pieces before the Lord. While others gaze upon, and cry out against the infirmities of others in the market-place, weep over your own in your closet; spend not time in examining the lamps of others, while you neglect to get oil into your own vessels. Exclaim not against the *sins* of Governours, and Courtiers, Templers, divided parties &c: make them matter of *Humiliation*, not of *Discourse*; and recoil upon *your selves*, saying what have I done? How have I provoked Cod as Principal or Accessory? O! run speedily unto him with tears; away into thy closet, fall down amazed, fill thy spirit with horreur, possesse the sins of thy youth as if just now committed; track the abominations of thy life; hide nothing

• Ps. 38. 4.

? Ps. 32. 5.

from him: chew the cud till they break thy heart, and become a burthen too heavy for thee to bear (o). That he may forgive the iniquity of thy sins (q); confesse them frequently, fully, freely, with all their aggravations, contrition, indignation, resolutions through Christ of reformation: what have I to do any more with Idols? and give the Lord no rest, till he hath blotted them out of his remembrance. Let the sight of thy hardnesse (which makes thee fear thou shalt but sin, by their enumeration, or a formall dull confession) drive thee the oftener to the Throne of grace, and there lie before the Lord, till he break the Rock, that the water gush out. Never greater cause to tremble, nor at Gods Judgments only, but the Hellish impieties that swarm in our own hearts. How is it possible to stand under so much guilt, without shrieks, cries, & lamentations? How can we eat or drink, sleep or laugh under the weight of that, which drew tears of water and bloud from our dear Redeemer? How can we continue our claim to him, call God Father, Christ Redeemer, the Spirit our Sanctifier, and not be pricked at the heart, for the injuries we and others do him? What ever filthinesse was ever found in men or Kingdoms may be found upon our skirts. O! hang up your harps, refuse to be comforted, lie prostrate, let your hearts be as the leaves of the tree shaken with the whirlwind; tremble O my soul under thy manifold provocations; O! let sorrow enter into thy very Inwards; Let the insupportable pressure of sin, sink thy very soul

soul: mourn as the tender mother for her Only Son; be in bitterness, so as thou canst not relish those things thou hast hitherto followed with so much eagerness; let the loathsomeness of thy sins be ever before thee as thy standing dish; separate some extraordinary times to humble thy self by fasting and prayer, that God would give thee repentance for thy own and others sins; fall down at his foot more solemnly than ever; weep till you can weep no more: And then *keep* conscience tender; let not your affections die; keep this fire alive, by bringing new fuel to it. Labour exquisitely to afflict your souls that you should be so little serviceable, so foolish, so vile, and commit so great, so odious abominations under Christ's Livery. And let them cut and afflict thy soul exceedingly from morning to evening, and from evening to morning. Let not the morions of a lazy spirit cause thee to desist, till God be pacified to thee.

Be pure in heart; sincere conformity to this To purity of heart.
one precept of Christ, facilitates and ascertains obedience to all the rest: were the first sparks of ill quenched, 'tis impossible they should ever break forth into a flame; How shall he kill, that dares not be angry? Actually commit adultery, that did not first transgress in his desire? Be perjur'd, that feares an oath? Or defraud, that permits not himself to covet? Divine interposition alone, can possibly secure us; and indeed, the suite for it amounts to no less,

than that he will force upon us the blessing, we resist, do us good, against our wills, and not suffer us to acquire those miseries we so eagerly pursue; which is so bold a request, that they had need be *more then ordinary favorites*, that shall prefer it: Those *hands* must be very pure that are lift up in such an intercession: and all that undertake it, qualifie themselves for it, by purging out the leaven of malice, strife, hypocrisy, and all filthiness of flesh and spirit; and project for the *purity*, as for the *peace* of the church; 'tis a mockery to pretend such jealous tenderness for her; to deprecate the ruine of Christianity, by the contagions and blasphemies of other men, when our selves contrive it by some other vice of our own; This is not to desire it should live, that none but we should kill it. O search out your own spots, and leave not a stain to be an eye-sore to Heaven. Set apart certain seasons for strict and solemn repentance; weep out all your contamination; pray away all your pollutions; purge away all your defilements; scrape the walls infected with the leprosie; hate the garment spotted by the flesh; mortifie your members which are upon the earth; hate all appearance of evill: live as if you conversed with angels, and did but tread below to cleanse yourselves before you put on the white robe: O come out of the sinning-pot, without any dross; out of the bath, without any stain: bring forth the stoln goods, now the thief is sought for: open the castle gates, now God comes to summon the rebell saying, *I am the man*; Rake the Channels, sweep

sweep the hid corners, lay open and unravell the secrets of your hearts and lives; disburthen your consciences; let no corruption lie rankled or festered within; let it run out of the mouth of the wound; sensibly tell out all your disordered affections, refractory desires, irregular motions, deviating treads, excursions, exorbitances, aberrations and defections in Gods ear.

Abimilech had like to have destroyed his whole Family (*q*): *David*, all his people (*r*): *Jonah*, those in the ship (*s*): 'Tis a dangerous

9 Gen. 20. 7.
7 2 Sam.

24. 17.
1 Jon. 1. 12.

thing to be a stranger to, or hide the iniquity in our own bosome. O! make your work a peculiarity of devotion, Sanctifie your selves with some solemn resolution; enter into a vow not to desert the nation with your repentance and prayers, till a discharge be brought from Heaven, and the nation settled in a condition to be spared. Express your gratitude by pitying and endeavouring to preserve alive your nurse, your mother, now upon her sick couch and bed of languishing. Cease not to visit her, till there be some signs of her recovery, open her inward disease, and apply that spirituall remedy, which will certainly, and can only work her proper cure. To endear your selves to our *only Physician*, make way by more exact compliances and observance of him. *Children* when they have a great suite to promote, are double diligent to insinuate themselves into their father's affections. Prudent *Hester* by degrees sweetens, ingratiates, steals her self into the *Kings* favour. 'Tis this whisperer, sin, that separates

rates chief friends, makes God stand aloof off from his people and their prayers. You leave your *Vows* as well as your *Prayers* with God; as you expect he should *answer* the *one*, so doth he that you should *pay* the *other*; break thy promise with God, and thou discharges him with thy own hand of any mercy he owes thee. Think not to *bind* him, and leave thy *self* free. He that's the best man towards God, is the best Magistrate to his Prince and Country. The blind man as blind as he was, could see this for a certain truth, that *God heareth not sinners*. Kings pardon not *murderers* at the intercession of *thieves*. He that would work effectually towards a great deliverance, can be confident of his successe, but in the same degree in which his person is gracious. The exemplary piety, zealous and holy prayers of a righteous man, shall save the City and destroy the fortunes of an enemies army; when God sees it good it should be so, for he never denies him any thing, but what is no blessing; and when 'tis otherwise, his prayer is most heard, when 'tis most denied. Strive to be still *better*, as there is more need and use of you. 'Tis a great thing for a man to be so *gracious with God*, as to prevail for himself, and others. We must not expect such great effects, as to cancell a decree of Heaven gone out against a people, to recover a dying nation, to prevail against an enemy, to blow away clouds of guilt that hangs over our heads, ready to dissolve into showers of vengeance with a *good wish*. When going upon this noble design

design you have undertaken, eye nothing but your duty: be full fraught with *Nineveh's* qualifications; see what a *great measure of remorse* and *reformation* is expedient to redresse our present calamities, and avert that finall devastation sin hath so long, so loudly called for. You have more to think of, than the frivolous, superfluous *cavills*, or *mundane* concerns. Apply yourselves to the *right work*: fall to down right Christianity; be religious to purpose; serve God in good earnest; single out him for your Leader, to stand in the front of this holy orders; let him be the best man who can be most virtuous and zealous in this religious work. And by how much more familiar you are with God, so much more are you to improve your interest for the relief of the distressed nation. They must be *Master workmen* that can repair the decays of a City grown crasie with sin; ('tis as hard to preserve, as build it;) that can underprop and keep a tottering Kingdom from an eminent casualty and downfall. Be you never so well prepared, yet you have a task which requires almost Angelicall purity and perfection to discharge.

Have an humble dresse. Attire yourselves in your Judgment suites, your visitation Rags, not gorgeous apparel, Beyond that decency, and moderate expence, agreeable to your severall ranks and qualities. O! what gairty of apparel? Richnesse of furniture? Splendour of Equipage? Which hath no propriety to any other

To an
humble
dress.

ther sense but that of seeing, and is lost if it be not look'd on. Among equalls is not only an emulation of pomp and bravery, but those of the most distant qualities; there seeming now no other measure, than the utmost extent of their money or credit, to the ruine of many, who want necessary clothing, only to maintain the superfluity of theirs. We pursue this folly with so great expence of care, time, and money, as if our *bodies* had been designed only for our *cloths*; and to be fine and happy were the same thing: never thinking of *Dives*, who, instead of Silk and Fine Linnen, has the purple flames for his unchangeable clothing. Our excesses have besides their proper guilt, that of injustice superadded; our superfluities being more the poors right than ours, assigned to them by God the grand propriator; and when their cry shall be joined to those of our riots, they will certainly be too clamorous to let vengeance sleep any longer. O! how many naked backs might half that cost cloath, which is lavished to put one in a fools coat, or to hang about them such bables as may serve to set out the street, or others to stare at? O now (if ever) cut of luxuries, strip your selves of vanities: when the people heard evill tidings they mourned, & no man

[†] Ex. 35. 4. put on his Ornaments (†). What true penitent was ever busie with the *Mercers Shop*? minded fashions, or the perfumer? God calls to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with Sackcloth (v). 'Tis a time

[¶] Ec. 3. 7. this, to rent and not sow (w); admits of no
terling,

[†] Ex. 35. 4. put on his Ornaments (†). What true penitent was ever busie with the *Mercers Shop*? minded fashions, or the perfumer? God calls to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with Sackcloth (v). 'Tis a time

[¶] Ec. 3. 7.

terfing, sprucing, flaunting garbs. The *Ninevites* repent in penitentiall apparel, they cast away the robe, and cover themselves with Sackcloth; (this prevailed more with God, than that *Quod non poterat Diadema, id Saccus obtinet* :) and do we in curious dressees, changeable futes, inlaid with vanity, chequerwrought with pride? If converts, very spruce ones; If penitents, gay, gaudy ones; If suppliants, very trim, gallant ones; If old fashioned Protestants, but new fashioned repentants; fitter for a dance, than dejection; for Jovissance, than repentance; for the stage or tiring room of vanity, than the house of mourning. Already are too many splendid blades, popping-gays, phantastick comedians, glistening, loose-fangled professors, that will not loose an Ornament, but renew levity; fitter to curse a nation, than to be instrumentall for a pacification; to irritate a patient God, than to aswage an offended; to fright a Country, than to support it. O! our patch'd faces are enough to make us monsters in Gods eyes: our long tails, to sweep all blessings out of the Kingdom: our powdered hair to fetch Gods razor to shave our besmeared locks. We have brought all nations into our Wardrobe, to act upon the garment stage. 'Tis a wonder that the flying roll of curses, hath not already lighted upon this exotick Island; That this Theater of vanity is not burnt down with fire, and brimstone from Heaven: That *Gog* and *Magog* is not called in, to pluck of our antick habiliments, to fley of those
skins

skins, which have clad themselves in such prodigious bravery, disguisements, and imbellishments.

To Temperance
and Sobriety.

Ex. 24. 17

1 Cor. 6. 5

Refrain from delicacies; eat not the bread of men (x). To capacitate you to promote piety and charity, abate, abstain from things lawful. Approve your selves the servants of God, in watching, in fasting (y). As if you had eaten away your *right* to the creature, and drunk away your *Life-plea*. 'Tis much, that a wounded conscience can have an eager appetite; or watry eyes look out for full spread tables, steeding without fear of Gods wrath, ready to break forth upon us. Penitents must not hunger after the Creature, while soliciting the Creator; or come to their appetite, while the stomach is full of the sense of sin, and divine wrath; nor sit down in the banquetting house, while preventing a shipwrack, and averting judgment. Do your work, earn your bread, ere you eat it. You have a diet, a cup; humiliation bread, the pennance goblet, feed upon, drink of that: when preserving of life, mind not nourishing of nature; when flying from *destruction*, be not intent upon *belly cheer*. Can the *mariner* gorge himself when the *tempest* is coming? Or the *souldier*, when the *enemy* looks him in the face? Can the *penitent* be at his *repast*, when vengeance blows her trumpet? Eat not now but abstain; nor feed but fast; 'tis a day of atonement (z), not of pampering; of afflicting our selves (a), not of satisfying the flesh; of rolling our selves in the dust

Nu. 31. 50

Le. 16. 29

dust(*b*), not of stretching our selves upon couches, eating the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the stall(*c*). Our *daily bread* is not to be thought on, when begging pardon for our *daily Trespasser*. We must not belch in Gods face; nor have the crums sticking between our teeth, when petitioning for life. Hollow cheeks, sunk eyes, gnawing bowels, macerated sides, fainting spirits, high preparatory fasts, gets admittance to God, rather then swoln faces, soaking gullets, swelling paunches, reaking stomachs, eyes starting out with fatness; as if we would have God to *seal our pardon* in the *Larder*. *Nineveh* seeks not to appease Gods anger by sitting down by her flesh-pots, eating bread, drinking wine to the full, wallowing in her vomit: the dread of Gods judgments, shut all their pantries, locked up all their cellars: the whole City sits like an *anchorite*; no pleasant food comes into their mouths: To free themselves from stripes, they chasten themselves before the Lord; to procure mercy, they proclaim a fast; half kill themselves with a strict forberance from necessary sustenance. But rather then punish the flesh too much by abstinence, we will hazard our selves upon all the Judgments of heaven. Cookery is become a very mysterious trade; the kitchen hath almost as many intricacies, as the schools, Our meat is not apportioned to our *hunger*, but our *tasts*: the *stomack* is made meerly *passive* in matter of eating; and serves only to receive the loades

^b Mic. 1. 11

^c Am. 6. 4.

we charge it with; whilst its election and choices are torc'tall'd by the palat or fancy; nor allow'd so much as a negative voice to retule, what for kind or quantity is destructive to it. With studied mixtures, we force our relucting appetites; and with all the spells of epicurism, conjure them up, that we may have the pleasure of laying them again. So unworthily treacherous to nature, that while we pretend to relieve, we oppress, giving her beyond both her *need* and *sufferance*. Our very *pride* mingles with our *guttony*; every thing is insipid, that is not costly; and 'tis thought an ignoble peasant-like thing, to eat a plain meal; and no Gentleman, whose single ordinary colls net as much, as would be a fair exhibition for some whole families. By examining our bills of fare, one would think, the *dogs-appetite*, were our *Epidemical disease*, if they did not consider, we have eyes to belee as well as bellies. Lust is increased by art and much charg; whence *France* hath learnt *frugality*, to fill their *tables* rather with *dishes*, then *meat*. How many, whose *Almanacks* consist all of *red letters*, nothing but *fistiv-els*; their intervals and pauses in their debauches, for study to find out whets and juleps, to provoke, satistie, inhance and satiate their boundless appetites. That allow themselves no longer intermissions then may just qualitie them for a new excess; and recover their wits, to put them in a capacity of losing them again. O *England* beware, if thou art not conquered by armes, thou lie not overcome with cups! Our Land is seised with

with the *Vertigo* of an epidemical drunkenness, and seems ready to reel into its own ruines. How many great families are become such perfect *Academies of licentiousness*, not of piety & vertue) that the most innocent puny will there, in a short time, become proficient? Their houses may well pass for *enchanted castles*; no man scarce, that comes into them, being able to guide himself out. They keep as't were solemn juits and turnaments of debauchery to challenge all comers, and variety of champions to deal with combatants of all ranks; as if they affected to out-bid the tyranny of the *Turk*, in sending an *halter* to his vassalls, & making them their own *executioners*; or thought it a disparagement to their quality, to go to *bell*, without an *honourable Retinue*. So great a *malice* do we bear to our *reason*, that, to oppress it, wee are content to expose our darling, and do violence to our very sence. Our *hospitallity* relieves not *strangers*, but burthens them; cures their wants, by the worse exchange of a surfer. How great a shew soever this may have of liberality, he is not to be thought to have drunk *Gratuit*, that hath paid his reason for his shot. 'Tis impossible *Bestiality* should be so universally agreeable to man kind, that all should pursue it out of appetite and liking; though it hath too many volunteers, yet tis this *press* that engages many to make up its number. Men strive for the *mastership* in sinning; as if some excellency in it; and to be able to *drink down* others, goes for a *manly faculty*: Hence fury and anger is produced, and

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the heart waxes hot with base flames. Drinking of healths, the rest of mens *Loyalty* & respects, to those great ones to whom the beginner shall consecrate his boile; as if a *disorderliness* (no beast will be guilty of) must shew *good manners*; and no man could be a *good subject* to his *King*, which dare not *rebell* against his *God*: those that *dare*, are *valiant men* indeed, but will, when it comes to *trial*, do little more for their *Prince*, than they do for their *maker*. Our whole *Land* seems to be nothing but a *Huge sty*, or *victualling house*. We *out-science* all the *Artists* in voluptuousness and *Luxury* for *Charger-principles*. One would think man lives by *bread* alone, for he is *alwayes* feeding; or by *liquor*, for he is more *for that*, than for the cup of consolation. Did we *dict* our selves, we might be healthful, and fit *for action*. We are so full fed, that our pursey *spirits* are adapted for nothing that is sacred. So much for the manger, so full of provender, that we even melt in our grease, when we should ride post to stop a Judgment. We are tyed by the teeth, to hinder us from religious exercises. Our tables are our snares, to intrall us to misery. *Epicures*, slow bellies, Gormondizers, are dull agents in a Churches pacification. How many in this *Dizzy-Island*, drink as if tunnels in their mouths? To be strong to drink wine is become a kind of *Chivalry*. Men wage battle at their full boles, as in a pitched field; come soaked with wine into the senate house; and in a *Drunken-humor*, consult about the safety of the Kingdome, but cannot become sober to pre-serve

serve it; nor shut up their mouths, to fence out a Judgment; nor loose a meales-meat, to obtain a blessing: but will eat and drink away the fear of Gods vengeance, though they die with meat in their mouths. Slaves of the palate mind not Church, nor state, but their own delicious fare. They face off Gods anger, with nourishing their hearts as in a day of slaughter; and will jeopard the loss of priviledges and ordinances, rather then forbear from their belly-chear, or eat ashes like bread. Good diet runs more in their minds, than sad accidents to themselves, or their dearest friends; and they will not rise from a banquet to save a Kingdome, but sell it for a mess of pottage.

Be truly apprehensive of Judgments past, present, imminent, and the perill wherein we stand. Sorrowfully take notice of the raging Pestilence, devouring Fire, mutual effusion of so much Chrittian blood, with the wofull disasters, and inexpressible mieries inevitably attending them. Nor ought any Judgment make so deep impression as spiritual; Gods repaying our unfruitfulness and actuall rebellions, with a senseless obdurateness, deadnets of spirit, spiritual divisions &c. There's nothing more ominous, than a fat heart, a spirit of slumber, an obstinate inflexible mind, for then we seek to outface God himself, and to put his Prophets out of countenance. O go circuit through your own consciences, and then walk the streets from one end of the nation to

A sense of
sin and
Judgment.

the other: observe the face and fate of it: Take notice of its maladies and ulcers: Consider what prognosticating symptoms there are of an emigration and examination: Ah feel her weak pulse; touch her cold lips, behold her grisly cheeks; mark her bad crasis and sad crisis; look upon the present dangers and disasters: apprehend what a flag of Detiance is hung out upon earth, and what a Sword is bathed in Heaven. Can such sins, and the nations safety; such impenitency and the nations impunity, stand long together? Fear you not some other plagues? Some general massacre? Some coal blowu with the great breath of the Almighty, that may sparkle and kindle, and burn us to Cinders; that not a wall or a pillar may be left to testify the remembrance of a nation? Behold they whose Judgment was not to drink of the cup, have assuredly drunken, and art thou he that shall altogether go unpunished (*d*)? Is there more sins: and shall there be less Justice? May not the vial of red wine, be reserved for the lips of this nation? Hath she been so often at her wits-end, and may not her brains at last be crasie, with an inevitable, and inextricable Judgment? Vengeance deferred, is not recalled; a forbearing God may double his dismaying and confounding strokes. The twigs are gathering to make the sharper rod; the rasor whetting, to shave with the keener edge. O be not blind under so many grievances; deaf, under so many warnings; asleep, under so many judgments

d Je. 49.
12.

ments. Believe not your *Politicians*, if they say, your nation is in no danger; believe not your *Pulpits*, if they preach you up to be pure against God's examining Justice; believe not your own consciences, if they perswade you, that you are prepared sufficiently against all accidents. Think that you have read Scripture with reckless eyes, if you have not found out curses against such sin: That you have frequented Sanctuaries like fruitless hearers, if they have not taught you repentance for such sins: That you have searched your consciences with *partiality*, if such trespasses do not drive you into passions: That you were never terrified with your own exigences, if it do not terrifie you to see a nation at such a disaster. Consider in what a talking age you live; how religion is little more than argument, profession and discourse; how many are wit-founded with humours, and stare upon themselves as if Heaven must look upon them with enamoured eyes; how hard to get people to confess they are guilty, or that God should visit a place for their impieties. Most dally with Sanctuaries, trifle with Sermons, and make conscience but a meer *Sexton* to unlock the great Doores, to sweep the Church, to ring the Bells, open the Pews, that a company of *Formalities* may take their seats. When the Lord roars mightily from on high (e), shall we be deaf below? and not see the whipping Pillar set up, when he smites the earth with the rod of his mouth (f)? When the Heavens write out our Judgments, in capi-

Je. 25. 30.

Is. 11. 4.

2 If. 21. 2.

Ho. 6. 5.

tal letters, shall not we read our own fatal condition? When the grievous vision is declared (g), shall we turn it into a panick fear? and rub off all frights or presages of misery when he hews us by his Prophets (b)? Shall we not stand in awe of the Ax, but dream rather of Jollity than Judgment, put off the evill day when it approaches, and dance upon the threshold when vengeance knocks at the gate? Shall we expell all dread? And stand in awe of no peril, though smoke and fire predict otherwise? In the greatest tempest drunk, intoxicated against all dangers? And not put on our armour, when the Trumpet sounds away to the march? Do we receive all warnings sitting? our repentance all lies in our ears. Attend to the cry, but not rise from our seats? nor change our posture, gesture, garb, nor countenance? The great God can't make us abate of the *Clarissimo*: We will lose nothing of the *Prince* to shew our selves *penitent*; hear much, but moved with nothing: Let God declare what he will, we will declare no astonishment: Our proud hearts can't shrink up: Our stiff Limbs can't arise: Repentance or vengeance can scarce make us vail a hat, or leave a chair empty, or move from a degree, or fly out of a Porch or Belcony, Shop or Counting-house, as people terrified with the sense of sin, and danger. We must keep state and our wonted garb in our most religious work; & act the *Prince* even in *repentance* itself: we shew neither *fear* nor express *endeavour*; but sit till misery must cast us down grovelling

grovelling, or Judgment strike us down dead. Never was the Judge nigher to come, and never less preparations for his coming. *Christians* have you not closets to mourn in? Or rather, do you not want hearts to mourn with-all? How can Christ wipe tears from your eyes, if you never weep for his absence? Or come to answer your prayers, if you never pray for his coming? We are as stupid as if we had never seen any change, nor ever should: And sit still in a mindless security, notwithstanding the great and various turnings of the wheel of Divine providence, which calls aloud to mind that great work God is doing in the world, and to meet him by repentance, lest he suddainly overturn and crush us in his wrath. Sure so great calamities never made so little impression on the hearts even of *good men*; as if God had given all over to a spirit of slumber. We put far from us the evil day, and are not grieved for the afflictions of *Joseph*. What a black and dreadful cloud hangs over *Christ's little flock*, threatening no less than utter overthrow; at least speaking a loud alarum to the sleeping Bride, to call upon and awaken her head, her husband, he that keepeth *Israel*, that neither slumbers, nor sleeps? Yet how little is the Church of Christ in every place affected with this Imminent stroke, ready to light on all? while some grieve more for private losses, than publick abominations which provoke God to destroy us; others instead of being upon the guard, are helping to make the breach wider at which the

enemy may enter : Most quiet and at rest, singing a Requiem to themselves. This deadness, and deep security, when all things speak an approaching storm, as it evidences a great Judgment and spiritual Plague from God upon our spirits; so presages no less than remediless ruine. What a dreadfull night of confusion and astonishment must be at hand, when such blackness without, deadness and security within, and the only means to prevent destruction seems to be laid aside, or at a stand ?

One-ness
of heart &
endeavour.

Be knit together in an entire affection. Readily shew all mutual respects of Christian observance to each other on all occasions. Let not only your particular safety, but of the whole army of Saints be in your eye and care, to raise or keep them from falls. That Souldier which can see an enemy in sight with his brethren, and not help them, makes it more easie for the enemy to slay himself at last: God would not *keep him* that cared not to *keep his brother*. *Christians* are the greatest losers these breaking times, who have lost so much of their love and charity. He is no true Israelite that is not ready to lift up the weary hands of Gods servants. Be kindly, charitably minded to, & lovingly converse with your friends and neighbours, which are not yet so sensible of the just cause of their Humiliation; zealously excite them with yourselves to be passionately affected with our sad state. Propagate, make a whole City propense to repentance : Let your believing God, beget
faith

faith in others: Your standing up from your seats, excite others to rise; Your empty bowels provoke others to fast; your stript backs clothe others in Sack-cloth; your squalid demeanour set others upon the ash-heap; your moist eyes set others on weeping; your confessing lips stir those tongues that have been silent these many years; your making reparation for errors cause others to deface their memory of foul facts with opposite virtues; your mighty cries fill the land with echoes of Devotion; your turning from your evil ways change the steps of others from exorbitances; your purging your hands from violence procure oppression to ake in the joints of other mens fingers. Be exact in your street, as well as closet work. A defective assistance is next to absolute carelessness. Every one should send in his supply, where all are interested. A common danger calls for an unanimous prevention. All the children of *Israel*, and all the people went up, and came unto the house of God, and wept and fasted there before the Lord and fasted, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the Lord (i). Thus be knit together as one man (k); call upon, and serve the Lord with one consent (l). So did *Esther* and her maidens; *Mordecai* and all the *Jews* (m). *Ezra*, *Nehemiah* and all the people gathered together as one man (n). The *Ninevites* even from the greatest of them to the least (o). But we think the generality may be spared; so long as some are serious. A small company will suffice to do the Church work

i Jud. 20.
26.

k Jud. 20.
11.

l Zep. 3.9.

m Est. 4.16.
&c.

n Ez. 8. &c.

o Ne. 8. 1.
Jon. 3. 5.

work, and preserve the land. If our own *Babel* must be raised, the whole earth can meet to build it. To worship our own calves the people can be gathered from *Dan* to *Beer-sheba*. When we fly about our own projects, the whole flock is upon the wing. The whole Kennel is raised, and on the full cry when we hunt our own game. There is a conspiracy, but it is in evil. We associate to exalt our own design: But to pacify God by mutual Covenant, or turn by solemn league, here we are ill affected, and clear malignants. There are epidemical diseases, and reigning defections, but no such universal perfections, or conspiracy in that which is good. There are Kingdom's sins and fears, but not national graces and lustres; no, here we are in our several classes; divided into parts and partitions: There is a tumult in our humiliation; we repent by piece-meal and as it were in a distraction. We have several breasts and motions, orbs, and constellations. If one side of *Gideon's* fleece be wet, the other is dry. If there be light in *Goshen*, darkness is over all the land besides. *Rahel* is fair, *Leah* bleer-eyed. If *David* dance before the Ark, *Michal* mocks. If some are sensible, others are past feeling. If some lie groveling upon the ground, others stand upon their tiptoes. Our Church looks a squint; the land is splay-footed. Collateral winds, mutinous Souldiers, blowing against, turning our weapons upon one another. O how sad in such a day, that when some are upon their knees, others

thers should be walking after their pleasures? When some are seeking God, others should be seeking their booties? when some are shedding of tears, others should be singing of catches? When some are fasting, others should be junketing? some prostrating themselves to regain favour, others prosecuting their unregenerate desire? Some appealing, others incensing. Some quenching the flame, others blowing up the coals? Some seeking to sheath the Sword, others drawing it further out of the Scabbard, and whetting the edge of it? Nay, our Devotions are but designs for our own Society, not for the publick safety. We pray for strengthening our party, rather than restoring the Kingdom, and wrestle against one another, rather than with God for the peace of *Jerusalem*. We would fetch in Judgments rather than prevent them; and have fire brought down from Heaven to consume our enemies, but we seek not to destroy his in our own bosomes. O what unclean brasts are there offered up for Sacrifice! What *strange fire* doth often burn upon the *Altar*! We rather *execrate*, than *pray*; *curse* than *cry*. Our petitions sinell of brimstone; they seem to be brands that come out of *Tophet*: Bullets, rather than bills; imprecations than prayers. Instead of just petitions, we insert our own distempered passions. We invent criminal things that God is not offended at; about these exercise our zeal, rather than those sins, that sink states and convert Kingdoms. With the noise of our imaginary crimes, we stop that
of

of our personal, detestable, execrable sins. We endeavour to fetch over Heaven with a circumvention. We cry cunningly, artificially, by parts, and halves, but we can't speak out our proper sins, nor lance the wound to the bottom, when we are begging balsome from Heaven. We are the greatest impostures in our devotions: There is a craft in our prayers; we dissemble in our petitions, as well as in our practices, and in our prayers have the art of conveyance to slip in other mens sins, rather than our own. We make our selves so much work about others faith, that we are seldom at leisure to regulate our own practice; and so have no way of stating our accounts with God, but by ballancing the excess of the one, against the defects of the other. 'Tis not seeing men have no religion, but one different from our own, that awakes our indignation. How many who are at odds upon a religious, can unite upon a vitious account; That mutually denounce damnation to each other, with full accord combine in those practices which ascertain it to them both; as if they so much feared to have their prediction, that they would be each others, convoy to the land of darkness. Those that will not by no means meet at the Church, know not when to part at the Tavern; that will not jointly partake of the cup of the Lord, are yet very sociable at the cup of Devils and excessive debauches, which are a most acceptable drink-offering to the infernal spirits. Many, whose distant opinions fasten upon one another

nother the brand of *Antichristianism*, like Gog and Magog join against the holy City. We juggle one another out of the narrow path that leads to life, but can hand in hand run our carrier in the broad way of destruction. We measure our religion, not so much by the opposition it makes to our lusts, as to those whom we first make, and then call our enemies. We make it a part of our religion, to tear and mangle Christ's body, when heathen souldiers that crucifi'd him, thought his coat too good to be parted. O how can we expect our sacrifices should be accepted, till salted with love? and know no difference between party and party, but owne all as fellow-members, that are partakers of the influence of the head. The father will not agree to answer the prayers of his Children that disagree: he will answer the requests of one Child for, but not against another: first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift (p). To expect that God ^{p Mat. 5. 23. 24.} should answer our *divided prayers*, is to put a jeer on Omnipotency, & to charge the Almighty with *inconsistency*: It puts an *absurdity* on God in making him to please men; nay, an impossibility, to please all men. The divisions of our prayers, may cause some to suspect that God is divided to whom we pray, and in time occasion the world to believe there is no God at all, for God is but one, and not divided. He must frustrate (in specie) many prayers of some Christians, as he will be true to the principles of his own glory: How can he grant all our petitions, and be God?

God? We attempt unlawful means, to force the lord out of his way; and all, that man might not be proved false to his own Interest and be cried up and down for a Lyar. How many, with Jonah, pray backwards? who rather then he would be accounted a *false prophet*, cared not so much for the *salvation of Nineveh*, as for his *own reputation*. Every one that rides in a fiery *Chariot*, is not an *Elias*. How can this nation be secure, if we conceal one capital sin? One hainous crime unsuppres'd, may break out with a Generall destruction. O that this nation could but speak out, lament and deplore the grand and horrid guilts of the times, without reservation or partiality. That all our crimes without diminution, retrusion, subtraction, could be bewailed with one national yell. O that our teares might cement those breaches which our dissents made, and our separations widen. That there were an harmony in pious intentions: that what one builds, another might not pluck down; what one layes a foundation for, another might not undermine. O when shall we agree indistinctively to procure a General pardon? To make a dominion adress to Heaven to be acquitted and accepted? O when shall we be free of the *Canaanite* and *Perizite*? And have the Neuters, Libertines, Hypocrites, out of the Land? That the whole nation might accord together in a pacifying service: that there might be an united dejection: that the whole Kingdome might offer as it were the same propitiatory sacrifice: that every heart and spirit might

might have the same penitential impressions and expressions; that we might leave counterfeiting, falsifying, tergiversating: that we might pour out Hearts like water before the face of the Lord (9). That our sins might be drained ^{9 Lam. 2. 19,} forth to the last drop: that we might agree in conscience, in longings, as we do in country, in language; and in repentance, as we do in relations. O how powerful is a holy combination in devotion? Where the hazard is publick, 'tis time there be a publick union to eschew the peril, that the whole nation put all their stock together to purchase a general pardon; that Angels may rejoice at our conversion, and God himself may look out at his Court-gate, and say, behold another *Nineveh*, this is the nation of penitentiall converts, *I will spare it.*

Deeply take to heart; rouse up your spirits to a lively ^{Mourning and weeping.} *piercing sense of and sorrow for our sins, & Gods displeasure.* Make an impartial account of, night and day lay open and bewail the crimes and miseries of the times; representing them in their hainous nature. O! our errors, heresies, divisions, apostacies, contradictions, bitterness, malice, animosities, injustice, oppression, perfidiousness, false-hood, covenant-breaking, hypocrisy, neglect and contempt of Gods word and servants, prophanation of Sabbaths, pollution of ordinances, abuse of mercies, stupidity, incorrigibleness under Judgments, pride, luxury, lasciviousness, bloody practices, dreadful oaths, horrid blasphemies, damnable heresies, impieties, and a deluge of prophanes disgorged

gorged from the mouth of hell among us, to the high dishonour of God, and shame of the blessed Gospel, require a Catholicon and composition of all penitentiall Judgments to purge these noxious humours out of this diseased body. O what tears, what ejaculations can be bitter, or loud enough for us who are to lament, not partiall and imperfect repairs, but totall ruines, and vastations? That see the materials of our *Sion* now reduced to dust and rubbish, who once saw it happily compacted, built together as a City at unity in it self. Bid a solemn adieu to all entertainments of joy and pleasure; make a strict inquisition; have a heart-aking discussion. Consider what hath been done in the quaffing room, the bed of dalliance, the banqueting house, the counsel chamber, the Treasury, the Tribunal, the Parlour, the Shop, and the Street: Ransack all back roomes; search all blind corners; leave not a sin undiscovered, which conscience may ake under, and repentance can mortifie. O! for all the cries of our sins, and the calls of the Temple, the stings of guilt, and gripes of conscience, the scandal of our enemy, and the scourge of Heaven, for the pattern at *Bochim*, the president at *Mizpeh*, for the example of *Nineveh*: Blush, and bleed, sigh and sob, wring and wail, help at an exigence; *repent* when there's nothing but *repentance* left for an Antidote; *repent truly*, lest your *repentance* prove a scandal and curse; *repent boldly*, lest an unmortified sin frustrate the vertue of your humiliation; *repent timely*, lest

lest not knowing the time of your visitation, the blessing you wish for, be hid from your eyes. O! the nation looks pale, fetch blood into her cheekes by your pity; It shakes, let your hearts prop her up with your pitions; Is sick unto death, cure her with your conversion: your buildings are loose upon the foundation, groundsell them by mortification: your goods are ready to be sacrificed to vengeance, bring forth your sin-offering, before the sparkes have taken fire. Sigh in the temple that you do not sob in the streets. Groan in your closets, that you do not roar in the fields. Wash your Cities in teares, that they be not drenched in blood. Be zealous, to free you from flames; penitent, to prevent ruine; serious solemn converts, fervent petitioners, for so great a Benefit: Wear sackcloth, lest you go naked: fast, lest you starve: sit upon the Ash-heap, lest you be brought to an Ash-heap: creep upon your knees; lest you creep into corners: shut up your selves in your closets, lest you be shut into dungeons: fly to Heaven, lest you fly out of the land: confess your sins, lest justice read the bill to your faces: condemn your selves, lest you be sentenced without reprieve. Look on your errors with passions: be humbled with conflicts; repent with agonies: appease with fire: reconcile with ropes: weep with torrents: pray with shrieks: cleanse with nitre, attend at the court of audience: lay it out at Gods judgment seat: wash in *Jordan*, till the Leprosie be departed: wrestle with the Angel, till obtained the blessing.

Q.

Leave

Leave not one grievance in Heaven to prosecute you; not one injurie on Earth to accurse you. Be perfectly renew'd, that you may be perfectly secur'd. 'Tis a great people, and how many sins are there to be expiated? What a great trespass-offering must there be made for it? What great penitents must there be to preserve it? What great affections, care and pity ought we to use for it? O wail and howl, go stript and naked, making a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls (q). Roll your selves in the dust, lest your wound be incurable. Let there be a great mourning in *England*, as the mourning of *Hadadrimmon* in the valley of *Megiddon*; every family a part, and every person a part (r). Lift up your voices and weep, untill you have no more power to weep (s). Let the priests (t) and ministers of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar (v). Rent your clothes; go up to the house of the Lord cover'd with sackcloth; spread your case before him, and lift up your prayers for the remnant that are left (w). When *Nehemiah* (x) heard of the peoples great affliction, he sat down and wept and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven; and afflicted himself with such vehemency, that his *Prince* he waited on, observed the anguish of his spirit which looked out of his eyes, and left a mark of sorrow upon his very countenance. He prefer'd *Jerusalem* before his chief joy; and felt the cotus of the Church's affliction through a bed of down on which himself lay. Oh *Compunction*! whither art thou fled?

¶ Mic. 1.8.

¶ Zec. 12.

12.

¶ 1 Sa. 30. 1

¶ Re. 1.6.

¶ Joe. 2. 17.

¶ 2 Kin. 19

1. &c.

¶ Neh. 1. 4.

¶ Ec. 1. 2.

fled? O contrition! where shall we find thee? Broken hearts! where shall we feel you? Trickling eyes! where shall we see you? Penitent petitioners! where shall we hear you? O! where is the Kingdom's scout? The Citie's remembrancer? The nations solicitor? Where are the Christian bosomes and bowels, groanes and cries? O, that we could purifie by water; that repentance had not lost her Laver; that our hearts were not made gross; that we were not turned into pure adamant; that we were not brass and iron! But there's a sad indication of it; here are sins enough to bring down a tempest, to make every trespasser an *Heraclitus* and the whole Church a *Niobe*; *Alas Alas*, might be the tone of the streets, a *national wailing* might be heard from one end of it to another. But our *Hearts* seem to have their old fore-skins; they have not yet smarted under the circumcising-knife. A great drought seemes to be among us; our land is turned into powder, and dust; for the cloud is not rent under us: The *unclean spirit* here walks in *dry places*; indeed, he hath taken away our terrors and our teares too; the water courses of repentance are stopped. O where is that *Key* of *Elah*, that should unlock those clouds? Where is that *Moses's rod*, which should fetch water out of those rocks? We should weep abundantly, but our hearts are not so soft as to distill or melt into sorrow. Our eares do not tingle; our eye-lids are not sore; we do not seek after the Lord lamenting, we do not bow down heavily: the

cry of *Jerusalem* doth not go up; we look upon our guiltes without remorse; we feel our errors with indolency; our sins can strike no teares out of our eyes; we are *sinfull* but not *weeping Nineveh*: how few can prove themselves converts, by their penitent eyes? Or bruised under our sins, by their broken hearts? We have many rivers in this nation, and yet we are a dry island: many crying inhabitants, but few weeping penitents. The flame may here rage, for we have no water: the top of *Carmel* may wither, for the springs are dried up. We are bruised in the temple, yet little moisture is drawn from us: the *minister* often turns the cock, but the pipes are empty; no water runs forth. *Jonah* cry's passionately, yet cannot raise up the mourners. to sigh with the breaking of their loines, that judgment might not break the bones of this nation; to take up a wailing to prevent a Kingdome from crying it self dead. The whole nation may perish for want of mourners. The songs of the temple may be turned into howlings, for there is none to wail for the abominations of the times. We are asleep in *Dalilah's* lap when the *Philistins* are upon us: at ease in *Sion*, when the gates of it are ready to lament. We have braines and armes, service and sedulity enough for other things; but here we have neither pregnancy nor prowess. We would preserve a nation, only by looking on it, or talking of it, or putting up a formall motion for it. We walk our streets, and discern no breaches in them: we gaze upon our walls, and behold

behold not their sides cracking. We are blind in seeing our sins, and stupid in feeling their judgments: as if we cared not to have this pile of wonder pulled down, this bright Diadem shivered in pieces. All nations admire it, and we only slight and neglect it. This nation walls in reckless inhabitants; feeds unthankfull guests; holds out her breasts to unnatural children, that are neither affectionate for her welfare, nor compassionate over her ruine. *Yet forty dayes and Nineveh shall be destroyed*; let it be destroyed, for we do not keep it from sinking. Were there here such a *Jonah*, there would not be such *Ninewies*. What do we at the cry? How are we frightened at the threatening? It is a great people, but what great insensibleness indolency, indevorion? We think to support a great Kingdome without laying both shoulders to it; or calling forth the two master-workmen, body & soul, to do their utmost for her preservation. We go in the beaten road; & sail in the ordinary current; we fight with the old dungeon dagger, and build after the old fashion. We have nothing but customary wonts, and common usages; we do not exceed, nor transcend. There is no *Præstancy* to be discerned. The flood of repentance comes not in with a spring tide. Our *repentance* begins and ends, without any egregious thing in it, to draw the observing eye of the world to look upon us with admiration, or set the whole world in a gaze at the beholding us. No adorning stamps, no beautifying prints are to be seen here. We desire to have

every thing else about us choice, neat, and splendid: were repentance our garment, how should it be embroidered? Were it our picture, how should it be limned? Were it our China piece, how should it be ingraven? were it our palfrey, how should it be trapped? Were it our linnen, our house, how should it be washed, rubbed, and adorned? Only our *repentance* is abject, despicable and sordid. How doth our art most fail us in that, which should most honour us, and eternally bless us? Can we own it? Or wil God accept of it? Or is he not ready to condemn it for our sin? And to judge us as well for a hypocritical conversion, as for an irreligious conversation? O superficiall paterification! Is this enough to mitigate an avenging God? To unsnare, to extricate a great people? Will not Judgment denounced, quicken you to sincerity? May you not be surpriz'd in your offering to God a counterfeit devotion? Will you dissemble to the last? And jeopard the ruine of a whole nation, in your outside cleansing? How far can you imagine you are off from the collision of Justice? Every corner of your Kingdom seems to tremble under the voice of a threatening God: Vengeance is awakened with the noise of your sins: The Heavens are offended with you: The earth seems to rise up in tumult against you: Most despise you, few pity you: Many consult sad things concerning you, and would fain be stretching out their hands to shake and shiver you. You have enemies within your walls, and your own consciences: How can you oppose such irresistible forces? Policy may

may invent many expedients for security, but the preservative is only that of *repentance*, to prevent a general overthrow, to wash away with tears, what we have deserved from a provoked God. O shall we ever see a general conversion? nothing but that will atone the Almighty. All by-contrivements, are but sinister drifts and bents. O when will men leave their seats of honour, and apply themselves to Sackcloth, and ashes, mighty cries, and turnings from their evil ways, and from the violence of their hands? Among us are some *penitents*, but how few *Ninevites*? Are there any alive to God? But how many dead carcases do we walk among? O that we were drawing out to the life *Repenting Nineveh* in orient colours! That instead of buildings and bulwarks, stately houses, and hoards of treasure, and heaps of amunition, there were but repentance! that instead of our raptures and priviledges, revelations, and curious languages, there were but repentance! that our congregations were so purified, and our Churches so Sanctified, that they might afford such Professors, such Saints, as might be able to bless a Church and save a nation by *repentance*! But 'tis to be feared that this is but a *nation of desires*, and that every stone in this City may sooner be altered, and new laid, than mens minds and consciences. In what a forwardness is this great work? Nay, is not the first stone for the generality yet to be laid? Men have not learn'd *Nineveh's* initiating, much less her compleating graces: We are not yet

come to her dejections, trepidations, percussions, astonishments, paroxysms of conflicts, gravitoned accents of prayer. We nourish the flesh, catch at the world, follow modes, temporize with changes, and leave perils and Judgments to the chance and venter. Happen what will, we have not so much as a wrinkled brow, or a trembling breast. Mirth is now as unsuitable, as Silver Lace on a mourning Suite. A true penitent should be the troubled creature of his age. He is brought to the Altar, and would even make a Sacrifice of himself. He seems to have no more life left in him, but to vent out his own anxiety. The sight of sin daunts, yea exanimates him. The Sun seems not to shine upon the day of his Humiliation; nothing to be discern'd but a cloudy sky, a black Eclipse, dark mists, tempest, and thunder: It pierces, pinches, grinds the heart, soaks the eye: contrition is full of collisions and convulsions, rough waves, and rushing scourges, sparkling, scalding bosome thrillings, and eye droppings. He is a strange penitent, that doth not change countenance, that hath not every heart-string aking. It would astonish one that among so many celestial shews, there should be so little Heaven, that the Devil should be lurking among so many Angelical reformers. There is some appearance of religion, but what repentance? or if repentance is it that of Nineveh? Angels tongues but the hearts of beasts. The earth never saw greater provocations to overthrow us, but is there so great propitiations in us to have

us spared? In what a dangerous deplorable state are we? Full of stupendious sins, yet full of stupid impenitency: A professing people, yet how far from evangelical purity: A corrupt but far from a contrite nation. Was there ever more need to lie in Sack-cloth, than now? this City hath lain in ashes: To shed tears, Than when we have lost so much blood? O! how may our walls shake, and every heart be daunted, expecting some unexampled Judgment for our enormous crimes? Will God be alwaies dared with challenging trespasses? Or mocked with formalities? Will the noise of gospelling tongues, and sound of Sermon-bells, be able to pacifie an incensed God? Or a few superficial specious pretences, satisfie the strict examination? 'Tis not our prowess, nor profession, our formidable chivalry, nor formal religion but *repentance* onely, that will privilege, protect, and shelter us. He may seise upon us in our streets, where we are defying him in our full strength. Or take us at the Church where we are deluding him (perhaps) with our Temple cheats. He may send a flood in midst of our quassings and dalliances; or fire from Heaven, when the Sun shines bright in our streets. A great cry may be heard at mid-night, when we are not suspecting the slaughter of the first born. The avenger of blood, may pursue and pluck us out of the City of refuge: yea, God may slay us, while we are laying hold of the horns of the Altar. He may demolish all our fortresses, and our places of oblation be made
a Sacri-

a Sacrifice to the justice of a provoked God ; for that our hearts are as fat as brawn, as hard as the nether mil-stone, at ease in Sion, settled upon our lees, and frozen in our dregs: our eyes are blind, our eares uncircumcised, our consciences seared with an hot Iron : we answer not crimes, with cries ; nor provocations, with vexations ; we will perish in our steely and flinty condition. Shall the childrens bread be cast unto dogs ? Shall God feed the secure, with the dainties of the perplexed ? There are no plasters, but for smarting wounds : no wine, but for the sorrowfull : no breast of consolation, but for the crying children ; nor garments of beauty, but for the spirit of heaviness. God lights up his candle to none, but those that sit in darkness : nor casts out his anchor to any, but where sensible the ship cracks, and is ready to sink. He lifts up only the hand that hangs down, and strengthens only the weak knees ; he holds only the aking head, and wipes only the bloubered cheekes ; he binds up only the broken heart, and sheds consolation in their breasts, which recount their sins in bitterness of soul. Paradise is promised only to the penitent thief. The distressed Publican only, departs out of the temple justified. And the Golden Thau is set only upon the foreheads of the mourners of Jerusalem.

*Fasting and
prayer.*

I summon, adjure, and beseech you bethren,
by all the worth your names are imbellished
with ; by all the sincerity you seem to have
reserved

reserved out of the defection and distraction of the times; by all the love you pretend to our Church and State: if you have any remnant of grace, any reverence, or regard to God and his command, (y) any sense of sin, any dread of a confounding majesty, any charity for an undone nation, if any gratitude for your hitherto health and safety, or desire of future comfort, by considering how you sat down and wept when you remembered Sion (z), and that your unmindful uncompassionateness hath not occasion'd our miseries; if any fellow-feeling as members of the same body; or care to imploy the gifts of the spirit, according to the mind and intent of the Donor (a), or when the Lord shall arise and have mercy on Sion, you would be call'd to partake of her comfort, Rejoyce ye with Jerusalem and be glad with her, allye that mourn for her (b): Even for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the spirit, that you strive together with me in the *prayers to God for this Church and people* (c). That it would please him at the last to look upon us with a favourable countenance, and cease from heavy displeasure. *The spirit of prayer is a publick treasure*, though laid up in some few hands, distinguished from the vulgar, not by empty names and aerie titles, but real donatives; distributed to them by God as so many distinct advantages, and abilities, towards the bringing him in his expected harvest of honour and glory: nor can he pray or be heard for himself, that is no mans friend but his own; no prayer without faith, no faith without

ypf. 122.6.

z pf. 137.3

a 1 Cor. 13. 7.

b Is. 66. 10.

c Ro. 15. 30.

without charity, no charity without mutual intercession. God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you (d): for I am bound to do it alwaies for you; I thank God, that without ceasing, I have remembrance of you in my prayers night & day (e). If I forget thee, O *London*, Let my right hand forget her cunning: if I do not remember thee O *England*, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not *Jerusalem* above my chief joy (f). Save Lord, or we perish. O that all who are concern'd in the grant of that petition, would qualifie themselves to present it, vigorously undertake this pious work! that God who hears not sinners, may yet hear them, O let no *Moses's* hand ever wax heavy, but be alwaies lifted up in a devout importunity: transcribe that holy oratory, he so often effectually used; plead to God his own cause, what wilt thou do to thy great name? And when there's nothing in us can pretend to any thing but vengeance, ransack his bosome, rife his own bowels for arguments of compassion; repeat to him his own titles (g), and by those sollicit, yea conjure him to pity. O! cry passionately, importunately, mightily; give your selves unto prayer (h); never hold your peace day nor night yet that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish *England*, and till he make *Jerusalem* a praise in the earth (i). Let your prayers be doubled and tripled, arise higher & higher as the floods of waters are increased. Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly;

d 1 Sam. 12
23.

e 2 Th. 1. 3.

1 Th. 1. 2.

2 Tim. 1. 3.

f Ps. 137. 5.
6.

g Ex. 34. 6.
7.

h Ps. 109. 4.

i Is. 62. 6, 7.

earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground (*k*), & Luk. 22. who in the dayes of his flesh offered up prayers 44. and supplications, with strong crying and teares unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared (*l*). O how 1 He. 5.7. great an ardency is requir'd to this intercession? What strong cries must they be, that shall drown so loud a clamour of impieties? How doth it reproach the slightness of our sleepy heartless addreses? Can we think to bind the Almighty's hands with withs and straws? To arrest his vengeance with such faint and feeble assaults? When nature and danger suggest to heathen *Nineveh*, not onely to cry, but to cry mightily unto God; shall the super-addition of our religion damp ours into a whisper, a soft unaudible sound? No small tempest hath long lain upon us; neither Sun nor Stars in many dayes and yeares appearing (*m*). Nothing but 20. ^m A. 17. black and dismal portents of a finall wreck, to a poor weather-beaten Church and people: Is it not time to learn so much of instruction from the waves that toss us, as to make our prayers keep pace with them, in swift uninterrupted successions, in loud and not to be resisted violence? A storm will teach the *profane* mariner to pray in earnest. And though the sky how ever black with clouds, carry no thunder in it; though the impetuous winds that blow from every quarter, should not break out in tempest, and bring ship-wrack to us; yet the wicked are like the troubled Sea that cannot rest:

we

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we

We have within us a principle of ruine, which can operate, though nothing from without excite it. A tempest is not alwaies necessary to sink a ship, one treacherous leak may do it in the greatest calm; and what security can there be to our torn vessel, whose rents, our continual divisions, and prodigious crimes, still keep open and widen? O Christian! canst thou sit still in such a season? Is the Church and Kingdom priviledges and liberties nothing? which beg, and cry unto thee, *if thou canst do any thing come and help us*? If thou hast no sense of the desolations of *England*, no pity to see *Sion* lie in the dust; but still cherishest those impieties which brought her thither, even they at least will avenge her quarrel, bring thee those miseries, the sense whereof shall be impossible for thee to avoide, or extinguish. Think not with thy self that thou shalt escape more than all the people; for if thou altogether hold thy peace at this time, and be silent, when so much need of prayer for a perishing nation, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Saints from another place; God will bring about his purposes of mercy some other way without thee, but thy self can expect nothing but destruction, thou and thy fathers house, thou and thy family shall smart for it, be destroyed: And who knows whether thou art come to the Kingdom, reserved for such a time as this (*n*)? that this Island *England* should be delivered by the pureness of thy hands (*o*)? that thou might have the honour to be the Saviour

▪ *Ps. 4. 13.*

14

▪ *Joh. 22.*

30.

viour of thy Country? God seeks at such a time as this, for *a man* among you that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before him for the land, that he should not destroy it (p). Perhaps thou (or none) art the man, and if he find not thee, he will pour out his indignation upon us, and consume us with the fire of his wrath. It may be there wants of the number that should prevail with God; who knows what one more may do as to the turning of the scale? And art thou fast asleep in thy own cabin on the side of the ship, which is ready to be broken in this mighty tempest? For ought I know, *for thy sake this evil is come upon us*; carest thou not that we perish? Yea thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God (q). The *Athenians* inquiring at the Oracle of *Apollon*, why their plagues continued so long, were answered, *they must double their Sacrifices*: nothing more dangerous than a plodding formality, we may as well betray Christ with a *sear* as *Judas* did with a *kiss*, *Lachrymæ mentiri doctæ*. May he not send us to flames below, that only mock him in athes here? God so delights in the prayers of the upright, that when their devotion is slack and cold, he sometimes brings publick Judgments on a nation, on purpose to alarm, rouse, awaken, and kindle their drowdie spirits, that he may oftener hear the melody of their voice by earnest importunate prayer, which is sweet, and see their countenance, which is comely, which when effected, they have done their errand, and accomplish'd their end. What meanest thou
O sleeper?

p Je. i. v.
Ez. 22. 30.
31.

q Job. 13.
4.

O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not (r). For the Lords sake, lend a hand to a sinking nation; double your devotion; be much, be mighty in prayer; put coals to the incense (s), bring your censers, and step in, that the wrath of the great God may be appeased. O weep and make supplication (t): Stir up your selves to take hold of God (v): Wrestle with him in his own strenhtg: Resolve not to let him go untill he blest us. O stand up in our defence: open the right Arsenal: bring forth your right artillery: make use of your proper weapons: appear in your compleat armour on the right hand and on the left: quit your selves like men in fighting this battle. The stout hearts, and bright armour I call for, are supplicating hands, the compleat armour of righteousness; the Captains and Souldiers are Intercessors, and Advocates: not field but Temple amunitions; not camp but closet ordnance. And O! that I could gather these companies together, summon in all the trained bands; see them all stand in battle array; their hearts edged with repentance; their tongues sharpened with devotion: that the ranks of converts would discharge and pierce the air with these darts, awaken heaven with this gun-shot, and even conquer God with this artillery, and make the spear drop out of his hand, pluck down his standard, unharness the Lord of Hosts, draw him to a treaty, and get him sign to Articles of peace. There is not any better countermine to
all!

r Jon. 1. 4.
&c.

s Lev. 16.
13.

t Ho. 12. 4.
v Il' 24. 6.

all our outrages acted upon earth, than by making them reverberate in our cries and prayers. O with a holy importunate impudence beseege and lie at the Throne of grace, till you thrust the Throne of God under him, & God in it, that Heaven may suffer violence, and the violent take it by force. Overcome him to be appeased. Go up to him with a trembling heart, as not knowing whether the place and people be not past reconciliation; *peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sins.* Rather than not come away with the pardon in your hand, offer to be slain at his foot to save so many alive, to be sacrificed yourselves, to redeem such a goodly place from an exigence; yea, to have your names and persons razed out of the land of the living, rather than the land of *England* should be expunged; yet now if thou wilt forgive their sins, it not, blot me I pray thee out of the book thou hast written. *Relieve us inhabitants!* you now see what a great task you are to undertake, that you had need lay to your whole strength, to bring forth a right, a happy people. If you fail in this work, *the nation is past remedy.* Either plead earnestly or the cause is lost; administer the best phylick or the patient dyes. God is ready to shoor and fight, to bring up his front and main battle against us, but where is reformation to latch arrows? To break in pieces speares? To meet the vanquishers in their march? and to carry an army of judgments out of a nation? Go then, gather your selves together, all that are present in

the land: see how many *true Ninevites* are among you: let *them stand* apart: look to your qualifications: examine the compleatness of your number: the perfection of your gifts and graces: consider, and correct; cry and cleanse; weep and reforme. As ever you would seem to have rifled your own hearts; to have dissected your own consciences; to have sent the intelligencer into the land; to have heard the cries of your abominations at Gods judgement seat; to have seen the armies that are raised on Earth to assault it: O set the the whole Kingdome before you: think upon it with dismayed, perplexed hearts: look upon it with weeping eyes: glow towards it with inflamed zeal: let your vigilancy be quick-sighted; your dread dismaying; your solicitousness anxious; your dejection abased; your meditation vehement; your reformation twice vigorous; your contrition grinding. Turn aside to bemoan apparent perils: fall upon your knees, to mitigate deserved vengeance: make an experiment of your own contrition: try, how you can humble yourselves, to keep your country from curse and confusion: cut off your own fore-skins, and doe your best to circumcise others: rent your own hearts, and make a wound in your brethrens, till the blood come. O Bring forth all the water in your heads to extinguish wrath: kindle all the fire in your lips, to put a heat into congealed pity: stretch out all the manacles in your hands to chain such an adversary. *Fast*, as if you deserved not to eat bread, till your Kingdome

be in safety. *Weep*, as if you had not teares enough in your eyes to lament the afflicted state of your nation. *Pray*, as if you would not rise up from your knees, till you have procured peace for it in Heaven. *Reform*, as if you would not leave a guilt behind to curse it. O! fly from all honour: condemn all honours: be strangers for a time to your own chaires, kitchings, wardrobes, cellars, porches, galleries, cattle. Converse rather with ashes than thrones; sackcloth, than tissues; biting hunger, than sumptuous banquets; bitter cries, than muscall instruments. O think not of the world, think upon Judgment: mind not preferment, mind attouement: look not upon the splendor of the Kingdom, look upon the horror of it: eye not your guardians, eye your enemy. Carry the threatenings of Gods law in your eares, and the peril of your country in your breasts. Let your hearts ake, and your lips quiver. So long as people are settled upon their lees, think that there is some emptying of the vessell at hand: when you are laid in your *beds*, suppose, that a punishing God may awaken you: when you are at your *feasts*, that vengeance may bring in the voider: when you are *selling your wares*, that your last bargains are even making: when you are *selling over your thousands*, that you are but purling up for a new receiver: when you are *looking out at your doors*, that you are ready to be pluckt over your threshold: when you are *coming from your temple*, that their doors are nigh locking up. Expect every hour when your bells should ring Awake:

when a skreek Trumpet should be blown in the streets: when you may inquire for a Gate to sigh at, and find none; or seek for a Pillar to shed tears at, and not one left standing: when nothing shall be heard among you, but tumults and distractions, wailings, and cryings, *Alas!* *Alas!* Would you then this? can you prevent it? Then you must not only remember the nation in your morning and evening devotions but consider how low you must stoop; what abjects you must turn; what meditations you must use; what castigations you must endure; what strange backs and bellies, loathings and lamentings, debating and debating; cleansing of consciences and estates; reformings and translating; separated daies of solemn prayer; all the decrees of violence and earnest addresses; fasting and prayer; almes and prayer; acts of repentance and prayer; prayer alone, and together with united hearts there must be, ere the breach be repaired. You must be all vigour and vehemency, dejection and devotion, solicitousness and sorrow, conflict and conversion, satisfaction and sacrifice, prostration and propitiation, reconciliation and reformation, soul and solemnity in so important a work. O there must be strong physick taken, to recover such a patient: a potent friend employed to get such a condemned malefactor reprieved: Princely persons to anticipate or repell vengeance lifting up her hand to strike: great fasting and mourning, weeping and wailing; many lying in sackcloth and ashes, for reverting

reversing the bloody decree (x). O they must be *Prime Penitents* which are engaged in this peerless duty: they must sit upon *Nineveh's* Ash-heap; macerate themselves with *Nineveh's* Fasts; drench our streets with *Nineveh's* tears; they must have *Nineveh's* plaister to heal their festering wounds; *Nineveh's* solicitor, to procure peace in this Court; they must polish their Diamond with *Nineveh's* Fire, to make it give the true lustre; they must write out their repentance in *Nineveh's* capital letters, to have it legible in Gods eye. And O that you stood upon equal numbers; that you were but the third, the twentieth, the fiftieth, the hundredth part of the nations; that there were but a common Hall of you; that you did but equal the number of your Officers and watches; that your sorrowfull accents might pierce the skies; that the shrieks of the mourners might awaken Heavens; that there were but enough to take the frowns out of Gods forehead; the menaces out of Gods cheeks; to retard Gods feet; to bind his hands; to put audience into his ears; compassion into his bowels; reconciliation into his breast, pity into his eyes, pardon into his lips; to keep his Trumpet from our gates, and his Troopers out of our streets! If there be a number among you which hath *Nineveh's* art, they may have *Nineveh's* success; they may bury all fears in the ash-heap, and shift off all miseries into the Sackcloth; tast away all perils; and pray away all judgments. God would pity, would you but soften the bowels of his compassion; he would

spare, would you but prepare for mercy; God will not turn upon us with fury, if these turn from their evil waies; nor stretch out his avenging hand, if these forsake the violence of theirs. Who can tell if God will repent and turn away from his fierce wrath, that we perish not. These penitents may send word to Heaven, that God may forbear sinning, for they have smitten themselves with repentance. They may convey news to all their enemies upon earth, that they may stay at home, for *repentance* hath reared them up walls higher than the clouds, which no scaling ladders can reach; and mounted ordnaces for them upon their Towers and Fortresses, which shoot assailants to death further than the spires of their steeples can be seen; yea, dispatch away messengers to all plagues and judgments, that they are not to come nigh to our Kingdom, for *repentance* hath gotten a warrant of remove to carry and convey them out of the land. Do you thus repent and plead, and you are as safe as *Nineveh*: God will be your pleader, and against all your adversaries; were it *Jonah* himself multiply reasons for your preservation. He will draw pity towards you from the most flinty heart. However his own breast will flow with compassion; you shall be precious in his eyes; he will forget nothing that may be an incentive for sparing: Should not I spare *Nineveh*, that great City, wherein are more than six millions of persons, which can't discern between the right hand & the left, and also much cattle.

But

But we rather express our *Judgment* than our *Resentment*, and make it more our discourse, than our concern, as to the frequency and ardency of our humiliations and intercessions. Our own private intercessions have been much apter to excite our devotions. Our Resentments have not been proportionable for that which is much better than our selves. Our Imminent present dangers have not as much awakened our fervour, given as sharp & piercing an accent to our prayers. We fall short of what we should, and might do towards our rescue. We look for favours without asking, and mighty comforts without mighty cries. We shake not the tree that the fruit might fall: We unlock not the treasury that we might carry home handfulls of Bounty. God inclines to an amiable countenance, but there is none to intreat his face: he offers embraces but there's none to spread out hands to Heaven: he is ready to redress misery but there's none to pour out a complaint. He would preserve us as happy creatures, but there's none to speak good for the people. There is an Altar but the Sacrifice doth not flame upon it. There are golden censers, but the odors do not steam out of them. God listens, and none cries: He sits in his Court of audience, but none make address to him. Open thy mouth wide and I will, Ps. 81. 10. fill it (y), but we would have it filled without opening. If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty: If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the Job. 34. 2. habitation of thy righteousness to prosper (z).

* Da. 9. 2.

* L. 3. 56.

But we would have God to awaken, without calling him up; and the habitation to prosper without building it up with devotion. We have sapless services: our lips and Gods ear are at a great distance. We would have mercy, but we do not set our faces unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, & sackcloth, and ashes (*a*); we perish by silence: zeal seemsto be at the last gasp, and giving up the Ghost, for there is nobreathing out of the cry (*b*). There are no such gusts come out of our lips, as formerly, which were wont to shake the rocks of temples. We rather live by our policies, our braines, than by our petitions, our tongues: we project, contrive, consult, confederate mightily, but we do not cry mightily. We have houles without noise, Churches without orisons, closets without lamentations, weepings, and wailing. We fish for pearls; without this drag; would break open the castle, without setting this petard to the gate of it. We have much fear and indigency, but little fervency. We scarce consider the project of our requests; our *petitions* might be taken up for *strayes*: we are not intent, but deviating and uncessant in our prayers. Very drowlie devotions come from us; most of our petitions are in Gods account but wast paper, and at the last day shall never be seen hung on the file in Heaven. The intercession of our Lord Jesus is a center of gold, and can we desire him to offer up our drowlie prayers for incense? Or expect, they should speed, that are neither worded by the scripture, indited by the spirit, nor subscribed by

by a bleeding heart. Our prayers upbraid our spirits, when we beg coldly for those things, for which we ought to die. We are more reckless than the most indolent: our prayers shew what an oisitant, and torpid people we are; for, we must carry all at the full charge, or we lay down our weapons: we do not rally our forces, and renew the fight. O! what light skirmishes do we use? How do we retreat upon the first lusts? We do not hold up our hands till they be weary with *Moses*; nor with *Jacob*, wrastle till we obtain the blessing. We may be sent away with a repulse, for we pierce but faintly; and smitten dead with curses, for we avert judgments in a very languishing manner. O that devotion were but articulate! that repentance could but open her lips! and the penitent draw up all his desires in this short *Entymeme*! what wonders might he work? *God* repented that he made man, and resolv'd to destroy him from the face of the Earth, yet when *Noah* built an altar, and pray'd to him, he smelt a savour of rest and said, *I will not again curse the ground anymore for man's sake (c)*. He was once so displeased with his people, that he said flatly, *I will deliver you no more*. yet when they asked a deliverer of him, his soul was grieved for their misery, and gave them *Jephthah (d)*. Prayer is the penitent's balm, his chief antidote, his principal engine, the best musick in God ear. It hath been the prop, protection, promotion of the saints in all extremities. When nothing could relieve, prayer hath comforted; when nothing

c Gen. 1. 20.
21.

d Jud. 10.
13 &c.

nothing could assist, prayer hath supplied. O how hath prayer calmed the tempest of a troubled mind? Put songs into the mourners lips? acquitted the guilty? justified the sinner? set the face whereby the soul might look right upon God? carried it with boldness to the throne of grace? sent up sweet odours into God's nostrils? How many have filed of the fetters of their sins, escaped out of the keepers hands, shut up the mouth of hell, stood spotless among the pure and bright spirits, stilled the noise of thunder at God's judgment seat, unlocked all the chests in God's treasury, frightened devils, exhilarated angels, cancelled bonds, cast indictments out of the court, compramis'd differences, reconcil'd mortal adversaries, cured phrenzies, eased conflicts, filled the breasts of disconsolate souls with extasies, fetched pensions out of Gods exchequer, drawn the signet off his right hand to seal Church grants to the faithfull, by the benefit of prayer? When cities of refuge, the hornes of the Altar were never so secure. And what shall I more say, for the time would fail me to tell of *Gideon*, and of *Deborah*, and of *Barac*, and of *Sampson*, and of *Jephtha*, and of *Hinnah*, and of *Esther*, and of *Abraham*, and of *Jacob*, and of *Lot*, and of *Moses*, and of *Joshuah*, and of *David*, and of *Solomon*, and of *Hezekiah*, and of *Job*, and of *Samuel*, and of *Jehoshaphat*, and of the *Prophets*, and *Apostles*, who through *faith* and *prayer* subdued Kingdoms (*d*); wrought righteousness (*e*); obtained promises (*f*); stopped the mouths of lions (*g*); quenched

d Jos. 12. 7.

e 2 Ch. 7. 11

f Heb. 11.

g Lu. 14. 6.

1 Sa. 17. 35

quenched the violence of fire (*b*); escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness were made strong (*i*); waxed valiant in fight (*k*); turned to flight the armies of the aliens (*l*); prevented (*m*) and removed judgments (*n*); opened the womb (*o*), the grave (*p*), the prison (*q*), and Heaven it self (*r*); divided (*s*), and healed the waters (*t*); stayed (*v*), and turned back the Sun (*w*); fetched down fire from Heaven (*x*), and water out of the rock (*y*); infatuated (*z*), wounded (*a*), destroy'd their enemies (*b*), and turned their wrath and fury into love and amity (*c*); unlocked such secrets as past the skill of the devil himself (*d*); obtained wisdom (*e*), pardon (*f*), and Heaven (*g*); cast out (*h*), and vanquished the Devil (*i*); removed diseases (*k*); prolonged life: (*l*); raised the dead (*m*); delivered from the belly of Hell (*n*), and was translated into Heaven (*o*). When God is resolv'd on a nations ruine, he shuts out their petitions, denies their ambassadour audience, and will not suffer his favorite prayer to speak with him: usually carries things so in his providence, that the prayers of his servants, (so loth is he to go against them) shall be wanting: either removes his *Lots* into the *mount*, leaving not any considerable number to stand in the gap, soe that no man (comparatively) stirreth up himself to take hold of God: or so withdrawes the breathings of his spirit in their hearts, that they are fallen into a stupour, benumbedness and deep sleep, when the

b Da. 3. 17.
25.
i 2 K. 20. 7.
k 1 Sa. 17.
32. 45 &c.
l 1 Sa. 7. 9.
&c.
m Ch. 14. 11
12.
Fx 17. 11.
2 K. 17. 14.
&c.
n Ex. 33.
11 &c.
Ge. 19. 21
o Ex. 8. 9.
2. 24. 25.
p 1 S. 1. 1
&c
q Io. 11. 4
&c
r Ac. 12. 5
&c
s 12. 5. 17.
18.
t 2 Kin. 2.
14.
v Ex. 15. 25
w Jos. 10. 13
14.
x 1 K. 18. 38.
y 1 Kin. 18.
36.
z Ex. 17. 4.
6.
a 2 S. 15.
31.
b 2 Kin. 6.
18.
c 2 Kin. 2.
22. 24.
d Ge. 32. 9.
&c.
e Da. 2. 13.
&c.
f 1 Kin. 3. 9
Ja. 1. 5.
g Lu. 13.
11 C. 13. 8. k Ac. 3. 6. 7. l C. 13. 8. 3.

13. g Lu. 23. 41. 43. h Ac. 16. 16 &c. i 1 C. 13. 8. k Ac. 3. 6. 7. l C. 13. 8. 3.
m 1 Kin. 17. 20. n Jon. 2. 2. o Heb. 11. 5.

ship

ship is in greatest danger. He loves *prayer* for the sake of the *advocate*, who can do miracles, yet the nation may not be worthy to receive the blessing (*p*). He often makes their intercession the condition of his mercy to others (*q*). Their wanted mercy may be stopped, while thy prayer goes not to Heaven for it. One saint may obtain that by prayer for us, which sometimes we cannot by our own. (*r*). Therefore not only *good men* in any great strait call in *their* help, to give a lift with them at this duty (*s*); but the *wicked* have solicited their prayers and company (*t*); as trusting to prosper better for their presence, and to find mercy for their sake more than their own. And when God intends to deliver a people, he drawes up their hearts to seek him (*v*); as the means to effect it (*w*). Therefore, when he stirs us up to ask any thing, 'tis a good sign he intends to grant it: when he prepares our hearts to pray, he will cause his ear to hear (*x*). When he doth not turn away our prayer, he will not turn away his mercy from us. (*y*). Prayer rightly manag'd, was never deny'd (*z*) it shall rather work miracles, than return empty. The *suit* that's faithfully asked is already granted in Heaven. The Spirit which searcheth the deep things of God (*z*) helps our infirmities, He must deny himself in denying those holy desires himself puts into our hearts. He saith not to the seed of *Jacob*, seek ye me in vain (*a*). Never any came to his door that went away without an almes: as the word which goeth out his mouth, so that which goeth unto him, shall not return
voide

7 Ez. 14. 14

9 Ge. 20.

17. 18.

Ex. 8. 9.

3 Kin. 13. 6

Job. 4. 1. 8.

Jam. 5. 13.

7 Job. 42. 8.

11. 1. 4. 16.

11. 1. 5. 20.

2 Cor. 1. 10.

11

Col. 3. 3.

Da. 2. 18.

1 Ex. 7. 17.

Jud. 4. 8.

2 Ch. 18. 3.

Act. 8. 24.

Ge. 14. 17.

8. 21. 22.

29. 8. 26.

27. 1. 10.

1. 16. 29. 10

Ac.

Da. 9. 2. 3.

7 Ez. 36.

57.

Da. 2.

1 Ps. 10. 17

1 Ps. 66. 20

2 Jam. 5.

16.

1665. 21.

2 1 Cor. 2.

12.

9 If. 45. 19.

void but prosper in the thing whereto it is sent
 (b). He cannot deny us what our advocate
 hath purchased by his merit: whatsoever you
 shall ask the father in my name he will give it
 your (c): such must prevail as have *propriety*
 in him: I will look unto the Lord; I will wait
 for the God of my salvation, my God will hear
 me (d). One branch of the Covenant is to
 bear our prayers. He hath sealed and subscri-
 bed several *promises* as so many blanks, giving
 us leave to write on them any desire we please
 (e). What flocking would there be to an
 earthly Prince that would grant any petition?
 I am the Lord their God and will hear them
 (f). If two of you shall agree on earth, as
 touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall
 be done for them of my father which is in Hea-
 ven (g). Ask me of things to come, concern-
 ing my sons; and concerning the work of my
 hands, command ye me (h). How much more
 prevalent is their importunity, than that of
 children with their indulgent Father (i)?
 These Heavenly favourites have gained
 more for themselves and others *gratis* by a
 petition to their Prince at Court, in a morning,
 than many trades-men that work hard all their
 lives. There's a singular efficacy, potency, preva-
 lency, I had almost said omnipotency in prayer.
 The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man
 availeth much: How much the Apostle tells us
 not, that's left to God's grace and our own ex-
 perience; but he adds an instance to confirm
 the

b 1C.5.11.

c Joh. 16.
23.

d Mich. 7.7.
Ps. 8.9.

e Ps. 145.
18.

f Je. 32.2.
Mat. 2.14.

g Jo. 16.24.
1 Jo. 5.14.

h Zac. 10.6.
2 Mat. 18.

i 19.

b 1C.4.11.

i Mat. 7.11.

1 Jn. 5. 16.
27. 18.

m 1 Jo. 5.

n Gen. 32.
26. 28.
If 45. 11.
Mat. 15.
28.

o Ps. 35. 13.

the truth of the proposition, *Elisr* was a man subject to like passions as we are (prayers efficacy is not from our worthiness, but Christ's intercession, God's prescribing the use of it, and his promise to it) and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain. and it rained not &c. (1). Did Christians truly know the *Power they have in Heaven and earth*. nothing could discourage or stand against them. No wonder faith overcomes the world (*m*), if it overcome its maker, and he be outwrestled, and overpowered by it (*n*), that making a present closure and drawing near between God and the soul. When their prayers bring not down the express errand for others, God is carefull his people should not have the least suspicion, that the denial proceeds from any *disrespect* he hath to their persons or prayers. He sometimes therefore gives the thing desired, only changes the Subject; or grants to themselves what he denies them for others: what he denies *Abraham* for *Ismael*, he makes up abundantly in *Isaac*: *David's* prayer for his enemies, returned into his own bosome (*o*). One generation sows prayers for the Church, and another reaps the mercy prayed for. O the Bounty of our God, who proposes a mercy, and encourages us to seek it; commands us to pray, assists us in it, promises audience, and vouchsafes a gracious acceptance; teaches us how, what to say, then gives us a Boon; prepares mercy, disposes our hearts to pray, then causes his ear to hear. He prevents them with his blessing; doth for them before abundantly,

abundantly above what they can ask or think: (p) so liberal to them that he exceeds their modesty in asking and checks them for it; open thy mouth wide and I will fill it (q). Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full (r). He commonly gives them their prayers with an overplus; not only what, but much more than they have faith or face to request. *Abraham* begs *Ishmael's* life, God grants him that, and confirms his covenant with *Isaac* for a numerous posterity (s). *Isaac* prays for a child, God gives him two at once (t). *Jacob* desires but God's pass, under the Protection of which he might go and return safely, with enough food and raiment to keep him alive; God sends him home with two bands, who went out a poor fugitive, having little besides his pilgrims staff (v). *Hannah* asks a son, God gives her that with three sons and two daughters (w). *Hzekiah* begs recovery from sickness, God gives him that with addition of fifteen years (x). *Solomon* asks wisdom, God gives him riches and honour (y). He not only cures the sick of the palsie, but secures him a pardon (z). And commends the Centurion for his faith, besides healing his servant (a). The Prodigal desires but to be as a hired servant, the father readily bestows on him the affection and priviledge of a son (b). The woman of Canaan begs a crumb (so much as we throw to dogs) Christ gives her a child's portion; yea, puts the key of his treasury into her own hand, and bids her serve her self, be it

Pl. 65. 20.
Pl. 21. 3. 4.

q Pl. 81.
10.

r Jo. 16. 24.

s Ge. 17. 18.
19.

t Ge. 25. 21.
22.

v Ge. 28.
20. & 32.
10.

w 1 Sam. 1.
11. 30. & 2.
21.

x If. 38. 2.
&c.

y 1 King 1.
8. &c.

z Mat. 9. 2.

a Lu. 7. 9.
10.

b Luke 15.

^a Mat. 15. ^{26.} ^a Ps. 11. 4. unto thee even as thou wilt (c). The King asked life of thee and thou gavest it him, even length of daies, for ever and ever (d). Christ gives his brethren not only as much food as they can carry, but their money in their sacks, and also his cup in Benjamin's.

The great
advantage
good men
are to a
nation.

His *Familiares* procure answers, when strangers stand out, yea even of *Domesticks* some are more *entire*: He that lay in *Jesus's* bosome could receive that intelligence which was kept from the rest (e). The *better men*, the *greater good*: such as have *great faith*, obtain *what they will* (f). They have often met God as *Abigail* did *David*, and moved him to put up his Sword. If any thing in the world can perswade him to preserve a nation, 'tis their prayers. If *Moses* will do according to the word of the Lord, He will do according to the word of *Moses* (g). If you have faith as a grain of Mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you (h). 'Tis a very *extraordinary* case, when such *Favourites* as *Noah*, *Job* and *Daniel*, cannot deliver a nation, but only their own souls (i). So that when he's resolved to punish a people, and Judgment's inevitable, he is fain to bid such not to pray (k); as if this was the only hinderance could be made, and he could deny nothing to them he loves, nor execute his fierce wrath, unless they let him alone (l). He could not destroy *Sodom* while *Lot* was in it, not vindicate

^e Jo. 13. 25
&c.

^f Mat. 15.
28.

^g Ex. 8. 13.

^h Mat. 17.
20. & 21.
2.

ⁱ Je. 15. 1.
Ez. 14. 14.

^k Je. 14. 11.

^l Gen. 9. 10.
Deu. 9. 13.
14.

dicare himself of his *enemies*, till taken care of ^{m Ge. 19.}
 his *friend* (*m*). He hath as it were *obliged* ^{12.22.}
 his *Power* to their *faith*: By their prayers the al-
 mighty (with reverence) is bound to the peace,
 when he hath a quarrel with his people. They
 can overcome him, not only when he's well
 pleased, when any child may deal with him,
 but when he thunders from Heaven, cleaves the
 rocks, when Sea and Land quakes and trembles,
 and his wrath burns like fire so that no man can
 come nigh him (*n*). He then seems to *indent* ^{n Ex. 17.}
 with them, offers them *compassion*, if they will
 hold their peace, and say nothing; he hires
 them to be silent (*o*); and entreats them to
 let him alone, but they will not let him go with-
 out a blessing (*p*), for as Princes they have
 power with God and with men, and have pre-
 vailed even against a command (*q*): May not
 we much more, who have no such *prohibition*,
 but are *bid* to *pray* and *promised* to *speed* (*r*)?
 When the wheels of providence stand still as it
 were, prayer oyles, and puts them in motion.
 The effusion of the spirit of supplication, is the
 first happy token, presage and intimation of ap-
 proaching mercy (*s*), for it gives God the glory ^{s 1 Chron.}
 of his Mercy, Pity, Power, Sovereignty, and ^{17.25.}
 universal providence over us and all things;
 obtains from him such a frame-disposition in
 the hearts of others, as may qualifie them for
 deliverance; carries him along with the means,
 that are proper for it, without whom second
 causes are of no value; but he can make any
 person a *Physician*; any means a medicine, where
 S himself

himself still joyn in the cure. He knows he shall have a revenue of unfeigned thanks and praise for what comes in the way of prayer (†): And 'tis the way, *this*, to direct the eyes and hearts of all to the first cause that sends and removes Judgments; to make all that see how open handed he is to his suppliants, turn beggars at his door (v); yea for the honour of his servants; that the wicked may see what esteem he hath for their prayers, who are the *Favourites* of Heaven and *Pillars* of the earth; and how much beholding they are to them for their *safety* and *security*; when all wordly-wisdom, policy, and contrivances can prevail nothing, for the prayers of a few poor contemptible inconsiderable persons to work deliverance, what an honour doth God hereby cast upon *them*? How little is their love to their Country, or that beholden to them, who to preserve it, think it not worth their care, pains, or a serious desire? Meer burthens and Caterpillars of the earth; that have mouths to consume our comforts, not to beg or bless God for them: but that they are good for nothing, is not the worst of them; 'tis a small thing that we want the help of their prayers (their solemnest devotions are an abomination to God) in comparison of the mischief they do us, whose lives are a *continual imprecation* of all manner of plagues upon themselves and place of their abode. A *wicked man* is a wicked creature, and dangerous; a publick evil to the state. He deserves ill of thoe he never lived to see; that he ruins and damns himself, is the least part of his wickedness

v Ps. 32. 5.
6. & 65. 2.
Dan. 6. 26.
27.

wickedness: By the *guilt* or *infection* of his *sin*
 (which is alwaies hurtful to the sinner, often to
 posterity) he commonly draws vengeance on
 thousands: 'tis they are the troublers of *Israel* (*m*) m 1 King
18.18.12.
2.7.
Flabella Diaboli; & *Flagella Dei*, as studying, en-
 deavouring, acting, meriting, and procuring
 mischief; blowing the coals of contention a-
 mong men, and of Gods wrath, till set the
 Kingdom on a flame. By the *blessing* of the
upright the City is exalted, but is overthrown by
 the mouth of the wicked (*x*). Scornfull men x Pl. 11. 111:
 bring a City into a snare, but wise men turn a-
 way wrath (*y*). 'Tis no small advantage and hap-
 piness to have interest in God's Favourites; we
 receive from them *true favours* though *insensibly*:
 next to *being good*, 'tis best being with those that
 are so: If we be not bettered by their ex-
 ample, we are blest by their protection and
 company. If God smite many for one sinner,
 he will spare them for a good man. A hypocrite
 was saved for *Noah's* sake, but not one righte-
 ous swept away for company. God must either
 separate the righteous from the wicked, or de-
 stroy the righteous with the wicked, or spare
 the wicked for the sake of the righteous. It
 fares well with others for their sake: *Laban* for
Jacob (*z*): *Pharaoh's* Court and Kingdom for
Joseph (*a*): Two families for *Noah* (*b*): A City for
Lot (*c*): The King must see how he's engaged
 to a Sojourner for himself and his (*d*). *Saints*
 are the honestest debtors we can deal with:
 They will pay us in our own coin: Those that
 shew them any kindness, are sure to have God

y Pr. 29. 8.

z Ge. 39.
27.
a Ge. 39. &
40. &c.
b Ge. 17.
c Ge. 19. 16.
21.
d Ge. 30.
17. &c.

cc. Tim. 16.

flc. 19. 21.

gZac. 8. 3.

b. King 2.

12. & 3. 14.

80.

2 Chron.

20. 12.

k. 1 Sa. 17.

32.

1 Ge. 12. 3.

23.

Le. 26. 78.

Pl. 125. 1.

2.

m 2 King 6.

17.

n 1 Sa. 17.

40.

118. 10.

4. 71. 23.

for their *paymasters* for 'tis their way to turn over their *d. bis* to God, and engage him to discharge their scores (e). The service of our love to God's children, are never thankless: When we are dead & rotten, they shall live, & procure blessings to those that never knew, nor heard perhaps of their Progenitors. It ~~are~~ *is* so good, *succession* shall reap it, and we shall be *happy* in making them so. God loves to remember his *ancient mercies*. To be faithful with God, is the way to oblige a world, even those who are unborn, and to entail blessings on succeeding generations. Such mighty charms are there in piety, that even a dead *Abraham's* bail is taken for a whole Kingdom, when ready to be laid up in the chains of a perpetual captivity. God is said to remember his Covenant with *Abraham*. *Ten* would have saved *two Cities*. *Isa* a blessing in the land of *Assyria* (f). There's a time coming when the *greatest* shall know their worth and excellency, and cleave unto them: It shall come to pass, that *ten* men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a *Jew*, saying, we will go with you for we have heard that God is with you (g). 'Tis they are the munition and strength of a Kingdom (h); for they seek safety where 'tis to be found (i); they have the greatest courage (k), the surest promises (l) and supplies (m), for God is with them (n), and except he keep the City the states-men counsel, the souldiers fight, the watchman waketh but in vain (o). Never any strove with God, and prevailed

prevailed, except by *Jacob's* way of wrestling. Such are fenced with divine favour, though destitute of all humane succour, while none more naked than their enemies, though clad in armour. What's there adversaries Sword and Spear, to going out against them in the name of Holts (*p*). *David* was sater with his handfull in the cave than *Saul* in the camp, with his guard and army. *Secrecy* is, where there is *true Piety*, though no Souldiers, or though the Souldiers drew not a Sword (*q*). The strength of a nation lies not so much in having prudent Counsellors, or mighty armies, as store of such as are the faithful of the land (*r*). Their cries mount beyond the Stars, pass through guards without resistance, open the gates of Heaven without a Turn-key, get audience when none else can be admitted, press into Gods privy chamber, shake his Throne, bind his hands: They command above, and reign in Heaven; God yields infinitely, if they cry mightily. They have the best weapons, and fight by faith more than others with all their forces: Their silent prayers are more piercing and prevalent, than the most roaring ordnaunces; their zeal is able to consume Captains and their fitties; their righteousness to rebate the edge of the sharpest Sword of their enemies. One supplic tory shaft, is better than a quiver of arrows; a single Saint, than an army of Giants: He can do more by an ejaculation, than others by their Spears; and by entreating the face of God, than others by gathering of parties; by looking upwards, than

1 Sa. 17.

45.

4 Ge. 31. 26.

1 Ps. 101. 7.

others by plotting beneath, which the land of *Judab* found true, in the daies of their godly Kings and Prophets. *Abraham* with his household-servants rescues five captive Kings, from *Gen. 14. 14.* four that were conquerors (s). How low did *be* beat the market for *Sodom*, brought it down to *ten righteous*. The push of *Moses's* prayer, did more than all the pikes of *Israel*: and one *Elisha* than three armies (t). Poor *Josiah* when he came to the Crown found the Kingdom tumbling a pace to ruine, yet because his heart was set for God, He took his bail for that wretched people, when they were even under an arrest from the Almighty, and almost at the prison door. And their safety was as it were bound up in his life, for soon after his death all went to wrack among them. *Rehobam's* walking in the way of *David* made his Kingdom strong three years, & might longer, if *be* had not by sinning pulled it down on himself & people; for his unhappiness is dated from the very time of his departing from God (v). 'Tis *state interest* to countenance and encourage pure religion, and those that practice it: no forts on the frontiers, or standing armies within are so sure a defence from forrein invasion, and inbred commotions. Their fervent prayers and holy lives do more for us, than our enemies combined powers and policies can against us. Indeed *they* only have true publick spirits. The principal effect of religion upon the soul is, to withdraw us from the love of carnal self (which contracts mens cares and delignes to themselves as the center) and whatsoever

v 2 Chron.
11. 16. 17.
& 12. 1. &c.

soever makes for its gratification ; and implants in us a pure and fervent love for the blessed God as the pattern and authour of all perfection, and our only satisfying portion, whom to know and love, imitate and obey, is the great riches and honour, good men are ambitious of. Their happiness is placed in that which affords no *monopoly*, or *matter of contention*. Hence naturally flow those qualifications which exalt their possessors to unconfined, enlarged spirits imitating their heavenly Father whose bounty and providence is unlimited and universal) : longing and labouring to have others possess of the same felicity they have tasted of, and is not diminished by communication. Their pleasure increases with their participators, and to do others good is one part of their happiness. Their knowledge, love, and conformity of their nature to God, necessarily enclines to *love his image* : those that bear it liveliest, he cleaves to with greatest dearness : is fill'd with designs for, and delight in their good ; and becomes a lover of all man kind, as on them remains something of God (which calls for our regard) and is sincerely, affectionately desirous they may attain that dignity and happiness their nature is capable of. They take to heart the state of the whole world : how compassionately do they think of the sad condition of poor *Heathens* that live under the tyranny of the devil ; strangers to God and Christ ? How do they long and pray for the *Gospel* among them ? How deeply affected with the Churches miseries in

any part of the earth? That groane under the effects of ignorance, idolatry, and cruelty? How heartily do they sympathize with those in bondage to *Turk* or *Pope*? How affectionately do they bewail the divisions, disorders, decayes of religion here among its professors? These are matter of their daily lamentation; with teares, and groanes they represent them before the God of mercy. How much more the miseries and distempers of *the land of their Nati- vity*, being ever before their eyes, must needs make the deeper impression on their hearts? The *sins* of all men are their grief, but their righteous soules are especially vexed with their unlawful deeds among whom they dwell (m). They have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart, and are pleading instantly for redressing sin and suffering; and more desirous of their prosperity, than their own (x). Even for the afflictions that come on their neighbors and country men, they sympathize & are greatly sensible: much more they lay to heart *their sins*, which they know to be so provoking to God, so fatal to the sinner, and the destruction it merits and presages. O what a burthen is it, to their spirits, to see a *nation* over-run with atheisme, infidelity, error, and prophane- sel- low-creatures endued with reason and pro- tecting religion, living in hatred and strife, op- pressing, vexing, destroying one another? How fain would they such miscarriages were remo- ved, and truth and peace, charity, and Godli- nesses brought in their stead. Others good, is their

m. 1. Pet. 2. 8

x. Ro. 9. 31.
Eph. 5. 32.

their great pleasure; the conversion of one sinner, is matter of joy to them, as to the angels in Heaven; much more, when the gospel obtains a free course and happy success, the word of the Lord prospers in the hands of his servants, and righteousness flourishes in the holy, peaceable, blameless lives of professors. Yea, so large hearted are that they, as they are solicitous, not only for the present, but succeeding ages; that the same privileges and blessings may descend and be kept among them. *Happy this nation*, which abounds with men of this excellent spirit. They'r much mistaken, who take its chief and only strength to consist in monies, policy of *States-men*, valour of *commanders*; and look on *good men*, in law places, as a contemptible useless sort of persons: they discern not the secret mighty influence they have upon those very affairs, whereof they think themselves sole masters and disposers, and how little good they *could* do without their concurrence. Had they beheld *Elijah* walking with his mantle, they'd have scarce thought he deserved that high title the man of God puts upon him, *my Father, my father, the Chariot of Israel, and the horse-men thereof* (y). True Christians, are the best, profitablest subjects, having serious, hearty, constant desires and abilities of doing good, laid out and improved in diligent endeavours. What though they never studied *politicks*, and have too much simplicity to apprehend the deep reasons and intrigues of *state*, so unfit to be made *privy-counsellors* to their *own*, or *ambassadors* to a *foreign*

y 2 Kin. 2.
12.

forreign Prince; yet they know what most Achitophel's little think of, that *sin* is the most dangerous underminer of the Kingdomes safety; that they mightily strive against, and all the fatal effects of it. Their prayers go daily on *Embassy* in behalf of the land, to the sovereign majesty of all the world, in whose hands are the hearts of Kings, who orders and over-rules all affaires; that he would counsel, direct, and prosper them. The *simplest* of them, if call'd to the *counsel* board, would advice to make *Gods glory* the end, and his word the rule of all administration, which if put in practice, would be found more advantageous, than all *Machivilian* subtilties. What though some of them are so weak, that they cannot wield a sword; so poor, that they cannot send souldiers of their own cost? The very lifting up of *Moses's* feeble hand, did more to discomfit *Amalek*, than the strength and weapons of the whole army; and when the little city was so straitly besieged by a great King, one poor man delivers it (2).

2 Ezech. 15.
Sec.
How unworthily
required.

How unthankfully doth the world repay this kindness? They scorn, contemn, maligne those, to whom they owe their happiness. They can neither abide, nor be safe without them. They look on them as their great burthen, who are the only bail God takes when their nation is under his arrest, and rail on those who are a wall unto them night and day. They cannot afford them so much as a good word, who are very good to them, and they are not hurt, neither

miss

miss they any thing as long as they are conver-
 sant with them (a). Though they know
 what one word (Aha!) cost, yet had they rather
 have the blood of a Saint, than half a Kingdom,
 (b) and would pay a great fine (ten thousand
 Talents) to have them destroyed (c). The
 righteous is an abomination to the wicked; 'tis
 a *Seli* every where spoken against. *Cain* will kill
Abel to the end of the world. The *supports*
 are the *troublers* of *Israel* (d). Away with these
pestilent fellows, it is not fit, nor for the King's
 profit, that they should live (e). With what
 wonder and care do we look upon and pre-
 serve other things, with what contempt and
 disdain do we in extremity overlook these?
 How weary of injuring other things, with what
 violence do we push at these? Is there a more
 dying groan among you, than the neglect of
 these? a shriller yell, than the passionate cries
 of these oppressed ones? There is *Royal blood*
 running in their veins; 'tis dangerous meddling
 with them, and no better than spilling *Christ's*
 blood, is that of his *members*; his heart is
 exceedingly taken with them, and set upon
 them, they are his Jewels (f) and the nation's; f Mal. 3. 17.
 its lustre and excellency, it shines only while they
 are present. Stately fabricks are but dim and
 dead ensigns to that beauty and adorn of their in-
 nocent lives. Prophanes shames and annoyes
 a City more than all its sinks and dunghills; and
 far worse than breaches in our walls, build-
 ings half levelled, and our monuments defa-
 ced But these leave no stench but a blessing
 behind

a Sa. 25. 15.
16.

b Mar. 6.
23. 25.
c Est. 3. 9.

d 1 King
18. 17.
e Est. 3. 8.
Ac. 16. 20.
& 24. 5. &c.

behind, and perfume every place where they set their foot. All good things are promised, and primarily intended them; the *earth* is given to the meek, and *Heaven* to the poor in spirit; for the wicked what is there own, but *hell* (g)? The *Sun* shines on the barren ground for the sake of the fruitful the tares are preserved; and watered because of the good seed (h). Why then do you strip your rooms of your hangings? Trample upon your treasure? Abuse and vilify your stock? Why so malicious and cruel, not to them only, but your nation, and betray and hasten its ruine more than abuse them, who can only resist assaults and purchase redemption? Against whom do you shoot your venommed arrows? Why will ye run the hazard of damning your souls, rather than not sling a dagger at the apple of Gods eye (i)? How dare you profess the name of Christ, and hate his nature in the Saints? Call him your head yet rend and tear his body? Your Sovereign, yet persecute his faithfullest subjects? Beat and destroy them as wrapt up in the bare skins of precise fanaticks &c? Bow at the name of Jesus, while you pierce him in the members? Many good works have they done for you, for which of them do you persecute and stone them (k)? Shall evill be recompensed for good? and a pit digged for them, who stand before God to speak good for you, and to turn away his wrath from you (l)? Shall they die who have wrought so great salvation in *England* (m)? Why must these worthy champions that

2 Ac. 1. 25.

2 Mat. 13.
30.

2 Zac. 7. 8.

2 Jo. 10.
20.

2 Jo. 18. 20.

2 1 Sa. 14.
42.

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step into this sinking cave to uphold it with their shoulders, find that to be their Sepulchre, which they supposed should have been their shelter? what frenzie possesses you, to pull away the props, to drain the city of its guards, to destroy the forts and bulwarks of defence when an enemy comes to besiege it? What do men mean to cut down the boughs on which they stand? To hasten their own destruction? Are they weary of their safety? Do they ask to be shaved of their strength? Little do they think that while they injure them, they do the greatest injury to themselves. They are every moment beholden to them; and owe their freedom and reprieve from hell and ruine, next to God's patience, to their prayers. Such as endeavour to destroy their persons and hinder their prayers, do (whatsoever they intend or pretend) what in them lies, to ruine us by pulling down the Pillars that upholds Church and State. To stop, corrupt, or trouble those fountains which are a common benefit to serve a whole Town, is a wrong to all that have thence their water. Take heed of provoking against you their prayers, especially God's Prophets; if their silence had been a sad omen, what are their *imprecations*? The grieving of *Moses* and *Eli's* spirits, cost *Israel* dear. *Zechariah's* prayer at shedding his blood, the Lord look upon it and requite it! brought on them the miseries of *Babylon*, and was not fully avenged till their utter ruine (n). Were it not that he regards the presence of his servants that sojourn with us, he would not with any gracious aspect,

look

n 2 Chron.
24, 21. &c.

- 2 Kin. 3. 14. look towards vs, nor see us, (o). The loss of a good man, chiefly a good minister, especially, in bad times, is a just ground of deep sorrow (p); woe is me, for the good man is perished out of Earth (q); help Lord for the Godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men (r); we may well mourn when they are taken away, our glory is departing: there is like to ensue some great *evil*, on the absence of so great a good (s). They are such a *blessing* where they live, that they seldome fall, but the earth shakes under them. When God chambers his children in the grave, tis commonly a prognostick of an approaching storm (t). 'Tis they that continue happinets to a nation, and carry it along with them. When the corn is housed, the beasts are turned into the *field*, and *that* into an high way, when the hedge is troden down or removed. When the *building* of the *Church* is finished, this *Scaffold* shall be taken down; and the *Theatre* of the world, when *they* have done *acting*. God will fire the house about our eares, when compleated the number and removal of his Jewels. The *pharisees* were troubled with *christ*: they thought *him* a thorn in their side, and that they should never be well, till he was gone (v), upon which Christ tells them, *yet a little while am I with you, and I go unto him that sent me*: they needed not to be so hasty, so earnest to get him gone, poor soules, they should want him too soon; and should seek him, but should not find him (though they would gladly); for in their
- 1 Sa. 25. 1
La. 1. 19.
Ze. 11. 2.
q Mic. 7. 1.
2.
r Pl. 12. 1.
- 1 Sa. 4. 19
11. 57. 1.
- 11. 26. 20.
21.
- Jo. 8. 32.
&c.

ensuing calamity, they should miss of their promised *Messiah*. Still the *world* stands for their sake, for whom t'was preserv'd; else fire should consume that, which could not be cleansed by water. Were it not for a very small remnant, we should long since have been as *Sodom*, and like unto *Gomorrab* (*w*). Their presence and prayers, will procure mercy, if there be any place for it (*x*). * 1st. 9. * Ez. 14. 14

Solemn humiliation for our nations sins.

A. Nd now my soul what remaines but that thou enter into thy closet; shut the door about thee; set thy self as in his presence who seeth in secret; beg his assistance; with all solemn strictness, faithfulness and brokenness of spirit, rip open and ransack, deeply enquire into and review the vileness of thy heart and life: so will appear thy own hypocrisie in crying out against such *parties* or *persons*, such *abuses*, or *corruptions* in *Church* and *state*, as the *cause* of misery, and not sinning upon thy own thigh, saying, what have I done or omitted? represent thy sins with all their heightening circumstances and aggravations, till so sensible of the hainous nature of the least sin, that thou canst not conceive any suffering suited to its demerit, but wrath eternal; and apprehendest not only thy contributing to our present *calamities* that so many lye under in part for thy sins, but that if
the

the rest of the nation had been like thee, 'twould
sure ere this have been utterly desolate. And hav-
ing judged and condemned, loathed and abhor'd
thy self, and repented in dust and ashes; and
sued out thy pardon; that *thine iniquities* may
not help to fill up the measure of *England*; im-
prove thy utmost interest in God for it, mourn-
ing for the sins, and interceding for the safety of
it.

My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my
very heart; my heart maketh a noise within
me, I cannot hold my peace; because thou hast
heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet,
the alarm of war, destruction upon destruction
is cried, for the whole land is spoiled (y); the
remnant that are left of the plague are in great
affliction and reproach; the walls of the city are
broken down, and the gates thereof burnt with
fire (z). I will set my face unto the Lord
God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with
fasting, and sackcloth and ashes I will fall upon
my knees, and spread out my hands, and weep
and mourn, and pray unto the Lord my God,
and make my confession and say (a), O my God!
I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to
thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased
over our head, and our trespasses are grown
up unto the Heavens since the dayes of our fathers
have we been in a great trespass, unto this day;
and for our iniquities, have we, our *Kings* and
our *priests* been delivered unto the *fire*, to the
plague, and to *fire*, and to a *spoil*, and to con-
fession

y Jer. 4. 19.
29.

z Num. 1. 3-4

a Dan. 9. 3-4

for the nation's sins.

283

fusion of face as it is this day (b).

b Ezr. 9. 6.
7.

We have reason to fear our end is come before thee, and that thou wilt destroy us with the land, for all sorts of men have corrupted their ways (c). By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery we break out, and blood toucheth blood (d). Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness is in us, neither do we strengthen the hands of the poor: we are haughty, and commit abominations before thee: neither hath *Sodom* or *Samaris* committed half of our sins; but we have multiplied our abominations more than they; and have justified our sister nations in all our abominations which we have done (e). Ah! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupt. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: from the sole of the foot, even unto the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores; (f) we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags: and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: and there are none that call upon thy name, that stir up them selves to take hold of thee; though thou hast hid thy face from us, and consumed us because of our iniquities (g).

Universal-
lity of sin.
c Ge. 6. 12.
13.

d Ho. 4. 2.

e Ez. 16. 49
&c

f Is. 1. 4, 5.
6.

g Is. 64. 6.
Sins of no-
bles
b Is. 2. 23.

Our nobles are rebellious, and companions of evil doers (b). They bid defiance to thee, notwithstanding all sacred solemn promises,

T

bonds

i Is. 5. 5.

bonds and obligations to obedience (*i*): yea, they put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; they stretch themselves upon their couches, and spend their time in mirth and vanity, but they are not grieved for the affliction of *Joseph* (*k*); therefore mayest thou abhor our excellencies, and hate our palaces, and remove our banquets, and deliver up our land, with all that is therein,

& Am. 6. 3
&c.

Magi-
strates sins.
i Ro. 13. 4.

Our Magistrates bear the sword in vain: they are not terrors to evil doers, nor encouragers of those that do well (*l*). All manner of wickedness reigns without restraint, and with connivance. National impieties are not punished by those who are for that purpose intrusted with power and authority. None calls for judgment, nor standeth up and executes it, that our plagues may be staid (*m*), but are themselves guilty of God provoking abominations. The wicked walk on every side, for the vilest of men are exalted (*n*). Therefore mayest thou take the sword into thy own hand, & bring upon us our own iniquities, cut us off in our own wickedness; because none riseth up for thee against the evil doers nor standeth up for thee against the workers of iniquity (*o*).

m Ps. 106.
30.

n Ps. 12. 8.

o Ps. 94. 16.
23.

Ministers
sins.

Mine heart within me is broken, all my bones shake because of our *Teachers*: How many of them vitious, brutish, commit uncleanness, fill themselves with strong drink, prophane thy holy things, put no difference between the clean

clean and unclean, walk in lies, look to their own way, every one for his gain from his quarter? They have not gone up into the gap, neither made up the hedge for us. Greedy, ignorant, idle, sons of *Belial*, that know not the Lord; their sins are very great before thee, for they cause the people to nauseate and abhor the offering of the Lord, therefore maist thou say, they shall not prosper, and all their flocks shall be scattered (*p*).

p 1 Sam. 2.
17.
16. 56. 10.
&c.
Je. 10. 21.
& 23. 9. &c.
Ez. 13. 5.
Hearers
Gins.

The Kingdom of God may be taken from us and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof, for our itching ears, slighting, loathing, prejudices, contempts, scoffings as to thy Word and Ministers. What rovings, lightness, vain discourings, prophaneſs, in the place and time of thy worship? neglect of, careless, perfunctory, drowlie, irreverent, unbelieving, untractable addressees to and attendance on thee? with stiff necks, uncircumcised hearts, resisting the Holy Ghost, not examining, remembering, pondering over, talking of, practicing what we hear? despising thee, by despising them thou hast sent? not prizing, praying, praising thee for them? unhumbled for the want of them, niggardly to them, not esteeming them for their work's sake? So that the daies may come that thou 'maist send a famine of the word; and we may wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even unto the East, and run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it (*q*).

q Am. 8. 11,
12.

T 2

O what

Families
Sins.

Of what failings in our several relations? [Superiors], not modest, sober, diligent, upright, wise, exemplary in their carriage; not doing so much good as the advantage of their abilities and places require; but abusing them to scorn, pride, oppression &c. [Inferiors], not humble, dutiful, thankful, submitting for conscience sake; but disdain, flattery, irreverencing their Superiors. How many come together upon base ends? How few marry only in the Lord? or live together as one flesh? whose only strife is, how they may please thee and each other? What neglects, jars, contentions, blazoning of infirmities, occasions of trouble, jealousy, disaffection in families? [Husbands], not behaving themselves as the head, to govern instruct, cherish their wives; but churlish, fretful, humorfome, imperious, not rejoicing in the wife of their youth, nor loving them as Christ the Church. [Wives], irreverent, unquiet, unchast, forsaking the guide of their youth, and forgetting the Covenant of their God (r), despising their Husbands in their hearts (s), not helpers but hinderers of their good, not subject in every thing as the Church to Christ, (t) nor adorn themselves as the holy women in o'd time (*). [Parents], humoring, cockering, indulgent to their children in vice; not educating instructing, chastising, praying, providing for them as they ought. [Children], not loving, reverencing, submitting, thankful; but disobedient, stout, rebellious, unnatural, setting light by Father and Mother (v). [Masters]

r Pr. 2. 17.
s 1 Chron.
15. 29.

t Ep. 5. 22.
&c.
* 1 Pet. 3.
1. &c.

v Deu. 27.
16.

sters], not careful in directing, governing, punishing, redressing disorders, examining, con-
ferring with, encouraging, rewarding those over
whom God hath made them overseers. [Ser-
vants], scornful, sawcie, refractory, answer-
ing again, disparaging, slothful, improvident,
defrauding, unfaithful, eye-servants, not obedi-
ent with fear and trembling, in singleness of
heart, as unto Christ. How few walk with
gravity, circumspection, and a perfect heart in
midst of their house; but by lightness, vanity,
and unseemly carriage make themselves vile,
and breed in others contempt of thy ordinance?
that labour to bring up in thy fear, those com-
mitted to their charge? that resolve and endea-
vour they and their house will serve the Lord?
We have cause to fear thou wilt pour out thy
fury upon us amongst whom are so many that
know thee not, and families that call not up-
on thy name.

In the *law*, O the neglects and evasions! the
fraudulent tricks and delaies! the partiality
and injustice! the cruelty and oppression! the
lovers of bribes, and followers after rewards!
Judgment is turned into gall, and the fruit of
righteousness into hemlock. In our *deal-*
ings, O the lyings, and deceiving! the unlawful,
unmerciful advantages, and over-reaching! the
unfaithfulness and dishonesty! the sophistications,
adulterations, wicked protestations! we do not as
we would be done by; but go beyond and de-
fraud our brother. In our *Shops* are treasures

Lawyers,
Trades-
mens ius.

Am. 6.
12.

of wickedness, and the scant measure, the wicked ballance, and the bag of deceit, unrighteousness lodges in our land, that was full of Judgment; our silver is become dross, and our wine mixed with water. Therefore maist thou smite thy hand at our dishonest gain, and make us desolate, because of our sins.

Professors sins.

Yea, amongst those *that profess thy name*, how few depart from iniquity? O what pride, lasciviousness, unfaithfulness, variance, anger, peevishness, passion, emulation, wrath, envy, hatred, malice, animosities, divisions, mutual upbraidings, slanderings, tale-bearings, defamings, distraction, railing, evil surmisings, perverse disputings, frothy, vain, corrupt communications, despising Dominions, speaking evil of dignities, not of the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another, formality, luke-warmness, hypocrisy, compliance with the sins of the times! How few are crucified to the world? that seek it with a holy indifferency, and reserve their zeal, and hottest endeavours for thee? O where are the humble, meek, patient, self denying, sympathizing, submissive, Heavenly followers of our gracious, tender hearted, compassionate Lord? That consider one another, to provoke one another unto love, and to good works? That sufficiently reprove, mourn for, assit against sin? With insensible spirits we complain of the *hardness of others*, that we are therefore unfit for mercy, not considering, were not our

hearts

beats hard, others might not be so; could we bewail their hard-heartedness before thee with broken hearts our selves, who knows, but thou might mollifie theirs, and prepare them for deliverance? How few put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindness, charity, giving, forgiving, forbearing one another? We have a form of godliness, but deny the power of it. We bring unto thee vain oblations; and offer the blind and the lame, and the sick for Sacrifice. We fast and pray, hear and receive, but do we do it unto thee? How many take up religion meerly to get gain? and pretend thy glory, to accomplish their base designs, by reason of which the way of truth is evil spoken of? We have left our first love, and lost our former fervour, strictness, and courage in thy service. Wo unto us that thus provoke thee to depart from us; to spue us out of thy mouth, and to remove thy candlestick out of its place; for through us, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles.

O how much ignorance, error, infidelity, atheism, prophaneis in a *land of light*? We have line upon line, Precept upon Precept, thy word in season and out of season; but we shut our eyes, deafen our ears, mock and abuse thy Ambassadors, loath our spiritual Manna, cast thy law behind our backs, and hate to be reformed; neglect and abuse thy ordinances, blaspheme that holy name whereby we are called, scandalize our profession, and make it as eminent for

Unfruitful-
ness.

2 Ch. 36.
14 &c.

vice as it hath been and should be for vertue, We call our selves Christians, and commit such enormous crimes, as are not once named among the heathens. We so little retain the power, that we cast off the very form of Godliness; denying the Lord that bought us; and not only think, but say there is no God. So that thy wrath may arise against thy people, till there be no remedy (x), and we reap nothing of our Christianity but the guilt of our apostacy, and that fiery indignation which awaites those that love darkness rather than light, trample under foot the son of God, do despite unto the spirit of grace, and account the blood of the covenant whereby we are sanctified an unholy thing: for the Earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth thornes and briers, in stead of herbs meet for him, by whom it is dressed, is vigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned (y).

9 Heb. 6. 7.
8.

Sabbath
breaking.

We may justly fear thou wilt depopulate our land, that it may enjoy its sabbaths, for our spending thine in sloath and drowlines, vanity, tedious dressings, idling in our doors, streets, fields, sports, recreations, tavernes and ale-houses, bearing of burthens, following our callings, vain discourses, tedious longings, saying, what a weariness is it? when will the sabbath be over, that we may buy and sell and get gain? In stead of turning away our foot from the sabbath, from doing our own pleasure on thy holy day, calling it a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable,
and

and honouring thee, not doing our own wayes,
nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our
own words; but wholly employing and im-
proving it according to the nature, use and
ends of it. So that for our not hearkening unto
thee to hallow thy *Sabbaths* thou mayst kindle a
fire in our gates which shall devour our palaces,
and shall not be quenched (z).

For the iniquity of our *covetousness* was thou
wroth and smote us (a); yet O how few whose
conversation is without it, and are content with
such things as they have (b)? From the least of
use even unto the greatest, every one is given un-
to it. O! what continual cares, carping and
scrapping, eager thirstings, studious consultati-
ons, earnest prosecutions, unwearied uninter-
rupted paines after the world? enlarging our
desires like hell and the grave, never saying it
is enough? worshipping, and serving the
creature, more than the Creator, God blessed
for ever? What griping, rigour and oppression?
What extortion and unlawful usury? What
hard heartedness, shutting up our bowels of
compassion, not strengthening the hands of
the needy (c), grinding the faces of the poor,
making advantage of their necessities, exposing
them to nakedness, in stead of cloathing them?
The hire of the labourers, and the pay of poor
tradesmen, which are of us kept back by
fraud, crieth, and the cries of them which have
earned, are entred into the eares of the Lord of
sabbath; so that we may weep and howl for our
miseries that shall come upon us (d).

z If. 58.
Je. 17. 27.
Covetous-
ness.
a If. 57. 17.

b Heb. 13. 5.

c Ez. 16.
49.

d Ja. 5. 1. 4.

If

Pride.

e Pr. 16. 18

f Ho. 5. 5.

g Il. 3. 16
&c.h De 28.
56.

i Is. 13. 9.

k Il. 3. 16
&c.
Idleness.

If *pride* goeth before destruction and an *haughty spirit* before a fall (e), *ours* testify to our face, therefore we shall fall in our iniquities (f). O the vain, swelling minds, the lofty eyes, the haughty gallants, the pride of heart, hair and apparel, the painted, spotted, phantastick ladies, walking and mincing as they go, with stretched out necks, wanton lookes, and making a tinkling with their feet (g)! The tender and delicate women among us, which will not adventure to set the sole of their foot upon the ground for their delicateness and tenderness (h)! Therefore mayst thou marre the *pride* of *England*, and the great *pride* of *London* (i); and it may come to pass, that in stead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and in stead of a girdle, a rent; and in stead of well set hair, baldness; and in stead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth, and burning in stead of beauty; and that our men shall fall by the sword, and our mighty in the war, and our gates shall lament and mourn, and we being desolate sit upon the ground (k).

Abundance of *idleness* is in us, as to our general & particular calling. Our land is full of tatlers, idle dames, busie bodies, lasie droanes, that labour not with their hands, eat the bread of idleness, worse than inidels, that provide not for their own house. How much precious time and parts are devoured in the bed, at the glass, board, unnecessary, unlawful recreations, vain corrupt communications? Inventing ways to misspend time,

time, taking pains to be rich, and to damn our
soules; but how little in working out our salva-
tion with fear and trembling, and giving all
diligence to make our calling and election sure?
So that thou mayst justly cloath the whole nati-
on with rags (*l*), and take us away as thou see'st
good (*m*).

l Pr. 23. 27.
m Ez. 16.
49. 50.

Wouunto us for our *surfeiting, drunkenness,* and
fulnes of bread. Among us are multitudes of
wine-bibbers, and riotous eaters, that live deli-
ciously, feeding themselves without fear, that
are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength
to mingle strong drink; that gives his neighbour
drink, and makes him drunken also; whose
God is their belly, who glory in their shame.
O the niceness, and daintiness! the rioting and
excessive feasting! the chambering and wanton-
ness! the staggering and vomiting! the abuse,
and sacrificing of thy creatures to our lusts!
making provision for the flesh! living in pleasure
and worse than brutish intemperance! nour-
ishing our hearts as in a day of slaughter! The
cup of thy right hand may be turned unto us,
and shameful spuing on our glory (*n*).

*Surfeiting
and drunk-
ennes.*

n Hb. 2. 13.
16.

*Unclean-
ness.*

O the vain attires and carriages, the wanton
eyes, the speculative *uncleanness*, the secret pol-
lutions, the obscene, filthy speeches, the toy-
ing dalliances, the lustful burnings and heart
adultery, the *actual uncleanness*, which thou art
every day witness to, who art of purer eyes than
to behold the least iniquity! Our land is polluted
with

with adulteries, fornication, horrid abominations; we assemble in the harlots houses; every one neigheth after his neighbours wife. We turn the sanctuary into a stews, and defile the temple of the holy ghost by our lascivious filthiness. So that thou mayst justly abhor and forsake us, who have given our selves over to work all uncleanness with greediness; and condemn us with an utter overthrow, making us an example to those that afterwards should live ungodly.

Swearing.

Because of *oaths* the land mournes. 'Tis a wonder of thy patience, that we have not cursed away all our blessing, and pray'd down vengeance upon our own head: that so many tongues set on fire of hell have not set the whole nation in a flame. O! how is thy great and dreadful *name* which we should tremble at in mentioning, and command our spirits into awe and reverence, taken in vain, and used to witness a lie, or fill up our common discourses? What a hellish noise is heard in our streets and publick houses? What volleys of dreadful, prodigious oaths and blasphemies are daily by persons of all ages and degrees, shot in the face of the great Majesty of Heaven and Earth? Whetting our tongue like a sharp sword, we have not fear'd to wound the name of God, when injured by men. We toss to and fro, tear and rend, the life, blood and wounds of our dear and precious Saviour. Thou mayst well grow jealous for thy great name, and arise and vindicate

cate

cate thy glory, from the contemptuous affronts of such insolent rebels, that dare thee to thy face, and force thee to give a convincing evidence of thy power and being, for the sins of our mouths, for our hideous execrations, perjuries, and prophane words of our lips, and for all our hard speeches that we have spoken against thee, and consume us in thy wrath that we may not be.

O! how is thy *sacred word* played and jested with, made light and prophaned by unhallowed wretches, that set their mouths against the Heavens, and *religion* it self suffered to be the object of our scoffs and rallery, in a nation professing it? We are ashamed of thee, of thy word and our glory; the name of a Saint or Godly man is ridiculous, laughed at and reproached: the honour of being religious failes, he that departs from evil makes himself a prey, (o) & is accounted mad. O how are the *sacred pages* themselves, made a theame of wanton drollery; and thy name, being, and honour prostituted to the licentious, irreligious wits of our age: that make a scorn of, and trample upon, all that is sacred and serious. Thou mayst justly bring upon us swift destruction for our mockers, dispisers, revilers of those that are good, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying, yea blaspheming the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Prophanes
ness and
blasphemies,

• 1659. 152

The voice of *blood* cries unto thee for vengeance

Blood.
ance

p Ge.4.10. *ance (p).* How many murders are committed among us, out of hatred, revenge, distrusts of the world, intigitation of the devil? Yea we sacrifice one another's lives to our lusts, passions, and pride: So that thou mayst speedily make inquiry for *blood*, and give us *it* to drink.

In sensible
ness and
impeniten
cy under
judgments.
q Je.8.12.

We are an obdurate, impudent, stiffnecked, impenitent people: we blush not, nor are ashamed when we commit abomination (*q*). The shew of our countenance doth witness against us: we declare our sin as *Sodom*, we hide it not (*r*). We have been at ease from our youth, settled upon our lees, though emptied from vessel to vessel (*r*); and live secure in the guilt of those sins which hath made thee become our enemy. We have grown worse and worse under all the means of making us better. Thou hast given us fruitful, peaceable seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness, the earth yielding its increase, we eat our bread to the full, and dwell in our land safely, and none to make us afraid; but we have waxed fat and kicked, abused and were unthankful for thy mercies; have forsok and lightly esteemed the God of our salvation, victories, and mighty deliverances; and knew not that thou gave us corn and wine, and oil, and multiplied our silver and our gold, which we prepared for our lusts. Thou hast hewed us by the prophets, and slaine us by the words of thy mouth, and our judgments are as the light that goeth forth (*r*): thou hast made our *plagues wonderful*; stricken us with the pestilence, but we

s Ho.6.7.

have

have not grieved, consumed us by the Sword, and in our estates, but we have not received correction; overthrown some of us, as God overthrew *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and we are as fire-brands pluck'd out of the burning, yet have we not returned unto thee (v): we have made our faces harder than a rock, we have refused to return (w), and will not see now thy hand is lifted up, nor be serious though thou seems to be naming us *Ichabod* & our glory departing (x). Strangers have devoured our strength; yea gray hairs are here & there upon us, and we know it not; the pride of *England* testifies to our face and we do not return unto thee, nor seek thee for all this (y). O where are our weeping *Ezras*, *Jeremiahs*, *Dauids* &c. Such an universal slumber, and general stupidity hath seized on us, that there is none duly laies to heart the sins, distractions and dangers of the times; or mournes for those abominations, whereby thou art provoked to destroy the land: no man repenteth him of his wickedness saying, what have I done? Or constantly, earnestly seeks thee, now thy wrath is ready to fall upon us: every one minds his own concerns, and not the publick, or thy providential dispensations: mirth and jollity, and wine are in our feasts; but we regard not the works of the Lord, nor consider the operations of his hands, therefore maist thou destroy us and not build us up (z).

v Am. 4. 10.
11.

w Je. 5. 3.

x 1 Sa. 4. 11.

y Ho. 7. 9.
10.

z Ps. 28. 5.
16. 5. 12.

Argumentative

Argumentative Supplication.

From
what we
have un-
dergone al-
ready.

a 1c.64.8.

b Job. 10.

But now O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our Potter; and we all are the work of thy hand (a); the effect of thy power and goodness. Remember we beseech thee, that thou hast made us as the clay, and wilt thou bring us into dust again (b)? And dash us to pieces as a thing of naught? Wilt thou destroy what thou hast made? And debase the glory of thy creative power? Thou being our founder, knowest our frailty, remember that we are but flesh, a bubble, a blast that passes away and cometh not again; and wilt thou not pity our weak estate? Wilt thou chase the dust? or pursue a leaf driven with the wind? O Let not the God of Heaven alwaies strive and contend with worms lately crept forth out of nothing, what glory in the victory? Lord, though thou punish our wickedness, yet preserve thy own workmanship; thou that hast created the object, create also the act of deliverance; let us live because thou gavest us life; that the praises of our creation may be joined with those of our redemption. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever; behold see we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation our Holy and our beautiful houses where our fathers praised thee are burnt with fire, and all

our

our pleasant things are laid waste: wilt thou restrain thy self, for these things O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace and afflict us very sore (e)? May it not suffice the Divine justice to have brought upon us the miseries we have undergone already? Is our slain, and our ruinous heaps, our poverty, our civil broils and confusions, nothing to our tender-hearted God? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto our sorrow, which is done unto us, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted us in the day of his fierce anger (d). And will our God still continue his heavy hand upon us? And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great transgressions, be angry with us till thou hast consumed us, so that there be no remnant nor escape (e)? Shouldst thou punish us in proportion to our iniquities, thou might never leave till thou hadst utterly destroyed us. But may not the Judgments we have felt already, shew thy Justice and hatred of sin, and by thy grace effect our return unto thee? And is it not acceptable to thee to accomplish it by milder means? O when wilt thou say, it is enough? and restrain the hand of vengeance from further prosecuting us? O turn thee unto us, and have mercy upon us, for we are desolate and afflicted. The troubles of our hearts are enlarged, O bring thou us out of our distresses, look upon our carcases, and our ashes, our affliction and our pain, and forgive all our sins (f). Make us glad according to the daies wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein

11. 64. 9.

d La. 12. 1.

e Ezra 9. 13. 14.

f Ps. 24. 15. &c.

2 Pl. 92. 15. we have seen evil. (g) O remember not against
 us former iniquities, let thy tender mercies
 speedily prevent us, for we are brought very
 low (b). Though our sins should hold all good
 things from us, and we obstinately resist the
 means of our happiness, thou canst otherwise
 secure thy own glory, and raise it even out of
 our ruins: But thou delightest not in the death
 of a sinner, much less of a people, but rather,
 and art very desirous, commandest, & intreatest,
 they return and live? Turn thou us unto thee,
 O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our daies
 as of old (i). Hast thou utterly rejected En-
 gland? Hath thy soul loathed thy Church there?
 O give us not up to our own waies, for so we
 shall but dishonour and displease thee, till we
 have destroyed our selves. And alas what
 profit is there in our death? Wherein can
 destruction bring thee praise? What Trophies
 of honour canst thou raise out of the overthrow
 of a handful of dust? Will a red field of blood
 make thy Escutcheon the more illustrious? Wilt
 thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead
 arise and praise thee? Shall thy loving kind-
 ness be declared in the grave? Or thy faithful-
 ness in destruction? Shall thy wonders be
 known in the dark? and thy righteousness in
 the land of forgetfulness (k)? O glorifie thy self
 in working in us what thou requirest of us, in
 order to obtaining thy favour; so shall our re-
 formation advance thy glory, as well as secure
 our happiness, and we shall praise thee, both
 by our obedience, and for our security; as the
 fruit

12. 5. 21.

2 Ps. 88. 10.
2c.

fruit of thy unlimited bounty. What can be more to thy praise, than that we may be unanimously devoted to thy service? Whilest our chiefest aime is, that thou wouldest advance and establish thy own glory among us, and about that glory set a defence; we the more confidently beg it of thee, that thou wouldst do good in thy good pleasure unto *Zion*, make her a praise in the land, and build up the walls of *Jerusalem*, repair the sad decays of religion, rouse us out of our stupidity and lukewarmness, assuage and drive back our deluge of prophaneſs, and so order all events as may be most for the interest of religion, to which the Holy God hath so tender a regard, and to have it rooted out of a nation, is just matter of sadness to thy upright ones.

We plead not our *own cause* only, but our *posterity's*; who, if we be destroyed, or have the Gospel put out, will, we fear, be left in the night of sin and ignorance, and involved in our ruine. And how can we but deprecate so sad an infelicity to them, and so much dishonour to thee, as to have our land overrun with barbarism, superstition, impiety, and this propagated from one generation to another would produce? Thy honour being so much concerned, may we not, with hopes of being heard, pray thee so far to continue thy favour to us and ours, that we may convey to them that *Gospel* we have received from our forefathers, pure and uncorrupted, that there may never fail to be a holy

From our
Posterity.

seed, a succession of sincere Christians, who may be the substance of these nations, when we are dead and gone. We beseech thee therefore prevent those calamities, which may either depopulate our land, or may be of so dangerous and extensive an influence, as to threaten to succeeding ages, that they should be wicked and idolatrous here, and miserable for ever. But graciously preserve us, and secure to us and ours the privileges of thy Gospels; so we thy people and sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever, we will shew forth thy praise to all generations (1).

Ps. 79. 13.

From the
multitude
and malice
of our ene-
mies.
m Ps. 25. 19.

n Ps. 137. 1.
&c.

Consider our enemies for they are many, and they hate us with cruel hatred: O keep us and deliver us, let us not be ashamed, for we put our trust in thee (m). How long wilt thou forget us, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from us? How long shall we take counsel in our souls, having sorrow in our hearts daily? How long shall our enemies triumph over us? Consider and hear us O Lord, our God, lighten our eyes lest we sleep the sleep of death; lest our enemies say we have prevailed against them; and those that trouble us rejoice when we are moved (n). Will not the adversaries of thy Church and people be emboldened to blaspheme their God, and reproach them? be more hardened, encouraged, and strengthened in their opposition by their success? and interpret it for a justification of their cause? and look on power in their hand, as an obligation laid on them, utterly to destroy all that gainsay

gainſay them; as if zealouſly ſerving thee, while butchering thy ſervants? And will not prophane perſons, from permiſſion of ſuch events, deny thy providence and being; and ſay 'tis in vain to ſerve, depend upon, and have re-
 courſe unto thee, ſeeing they are not preſerved or reſcued that do? O let not any that have an ill will at our *Sion*, have cauſe to ſay, ah! ſo would we have it. Help us, O God of our ſal-
 vation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our ſins for thy name ſake; wherefore ſhould the Heathen ſay, where is their God? their reformation, their power and purity of religion, the glorious providences and promiſes they boaſt of? What are they the better for their prayers and faſtings? O God, why haſt thou caſt us off for ever? Why doth thine anger ſmoke againſt the ſheep of thy paſture? How long ſhall the adverſary reproach? Shall the enemy blaſpheme thy name for ever? Why withdraweſt thou thine hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy boſome. Remember thy congregation which thou haſt purchaſed of old, the rod of thine inheritance, which thou haſt redeemed, this mount *Sion* whercin thou haſt dwelt, O deliver not the ſoul of thy turtle dove unto the multitude of the wicked; forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever. Have reſpect unto the Covenant: O let not the oppreſſed return aſhamed; let the poor and needy praiſe thy name(*o*). Conſider the quality of thoſe, and impiety of their deſigns who ſeek our ruine: *o* Pf. 74. 6.
&c.

Enemies, not so much to *us* as *thy self* and *Gospel*, so far as it opposes their interest: Arise O Lord, plead thy own cause, be jealous for thy glory, fight against those that fight against us and thee; is not our quarrel thine? and thy interest ours also? And wilt thou give up thy darling to the dogs? thy only ones to the Lyons? Or shall any harden themselves against thee and prosper? O deliver us from such whose tender mercies are cruel; who willingly will know no bounds in afflicting us, but our final subversion; when thou art but a little displeased, will help forward the affliction (p): rather let us fall into the hands of God, than of men, do thou correct us, but with Judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring us to nothing (q).

pZec. i. 15.

qJe. i. 24.

From former mercies.

Let our *former mercies* move thee to bestow those we want: from our experience of thy readiness to help, we hope thou wilt not be less gracious now; nor deny that assistance so oft afforded us. Will God now abandon those who have so long been the charge of his providence, to the lusts and fury of unreasonable men? Shall they turn the work of infinite wisdom, into a *Babel* of confusion? And scatter those whom God hath gathered together? After so many wonders of mercie that have been shewn among us and for us, shall we become the scorn and derision of all nations? Wilt thou cast off those thou hast raised up? Take so much pains, to no purpose? And demolish what

what might stand as a lasting monument of thy bounty? Is thy goodness abated, that thou wilt not, or thy hand shortened, that thou canst not save? Is not thy *readiness* and *power* to do good, and *thou* the same, yesterday, and to day, and for ever? Thy mercy, O God, is unwearied in stretching out it self for the defence of thy servants: the treasures of thy goodness are bottomless and inexhaustible; thy servants have found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy which thou hast shewed unto us, in saving us, and we cannot escape without thy caring for us (r). O thou that hast done r Ge. 19. 19.
 so much for us, and so often come in to our assistance, when all creature helps have failed, forsake us not in this exigence, let not all thy care and cost be lost. O perfect that which concerneth us: thy mercy O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the works of thine own hands (s). Thou hast wrought great deliverances s Ps. 128. 8.
 for us; shall we now die for want of it? And thy servants whom thou hast delivered from the Lyon and the Bear, fall into the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines? Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord! Awake as in the ancient daies, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut *Rahab*, and wounded the *Dragon*? Art thou not it which hath dried the Sea, the waters of the greatest deep, that hath made the depths of the Sea, a way for the ransomed to pass over (t)? Thou art he that t Ps. 51. 9.
 took us out of the womb of destruction; thou 10.
 didst make us hope, when we were upon the brink

brink of ruine; we were cast upon thee from the womb, thou art our God from our mother's belly, hide not thy face from us; put not thy servants away in anger; thou hast been our help, leave us not, neither forsake us, O God of our salvation (v).

Ps 27 9.

We are his
people

Give ear, O Shepherd of *Israel*, thou that leadest *Joseph* like a flock, thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth before *England Scotland and Ireland*, stir up thy strength & come and save us. Thou feedest us with the bread of tears, and givest us tears to drink in great measure. Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbors; and our enemies laugh among themselves. Turn us again, O God of Hosts, and cause thy face to shine and we shall be saved. Thou hast brought a Vine out of *Aegypt*; thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it, thou prepar'dst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root; and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it: and the boughs thereof were like the goodly Cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the Sea, and her branches unto the River. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way, do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth wait it, and the wild beast out of the field doth devour it. Return we beseech thee, O Lord of Hosts, look down from Heaven and behold and visit this Vine, and the Vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, & the branch that thou madest strong for thy self. Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the
Son

Son of man whom thou madest strong for thy self (w). Save us or we perish, *O thou Preserver of men*; since that is thy *property* let it be thy *pleasure*: Imprint this thy name in so fair a Character, that all the inhabitants of the land may read and rejoice. With thee 'tis as easie to save as destroy; to raise us to mercy, as drown us in misery. O shew forth thy power in attendance on thy goodness; and because God is our *Preserver*, let *England* be *Preserved*; since we call thee our *Protector*, let us be called thy *Protected*; since the Lord is our *Saviour*, let us be the *Saved* of the Lord; since to believe this, is our *duty*, let it be our *safety* also. Let not thy providence be *blasphemed*, by being *disowned* among the *Heathen*; who will conclude because God could not preserve this nation where his worship hath been chiefly owned; therefore he destroyed it (x). Let not *Protestant religion* be discouraged, in that the *Professors of it* are destroyed; though but *Professors*, preserve them for the *profession sake*. May we not represent before thee, the present state and condition of the world? How few enjoy, and fewer embrace the Gospel? And where hath it been more powerfully, successfully dispensed than here? And will the Lord make his poor Kingdome the *Butt* to level his arrows at? and chuse us from among the rest, a people called by his name, to pour upon us the hottest of his fury? Must Judgment thus begin at the house of God? When there are so few obey the Gospel? Will the Lord root up so many professing Christians when

w Ps. 80.

x Num. 14: 15, 16.

when the number is so great of the heathens that know thee not, and of the families that call not upon thy name? Shall such a doleful wound be given to thy Church, which is already sunk into sorrow, and weak an estate? Will not the maligners of our peace and Gospel, to have their wills of us, endanger the ruine of other Churches also, when their friends are so much lessened and disabled, and their enemies strengthened? And is not this thy own cause and quarrel? & thy glory enfolded in thy Churches welfare & successes, against all that seek to destroy it? Is not the relation & dearness, between Christ & his members the same now, as it was, when to one that with violence pierced him, he cried out, *why persecutest thou me?* Is not our God struck at by the blows that are given to his Church? And whilest the enraged instruments of Satan, are endeavouring not to leave him a people upon earth, doth not this speak them much more desirous there should be no God in Heaven? Thou O Lord art our Father, Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting, O Lord, why hast thou made us to erre from thy waies, and hardened our hearts from thy fear? Return for thy servants sake, the Tribes of thy inheritance. The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while, our adversaries have troden down thy Sanctuary. We are thine, thou never barest rule over them, they were not called by thy name (y). O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble; why shouldst thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a way-faring man, that turneth aside

y *Is. 63. 16.*
&c.

afide to tarry for a night? Why shouldst thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? Yet thou O Lord art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not (2). For the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased the Lord to make us his people (1). Were we not in an ill case when thou beganst to do us good, and to lend us thy gospel? Hast thou not written thy *name* in fairer characters upon us, than on any other nation? Upon whom the *Envy* of *Papists*, and *Hypocrites* of the *Protestants*, are especially set? Art not thou then concerned in our welfare? Thou knewest not onely what we have done, but what we would do; as it hindered thee not from beginning a good work, let it not from perfecting it.

Isa. 43. 2

Isa. 43. 22.

O glorifie thy name in our preservation, by giving the *inhabitants*, especially the *professors* of our nation, opportunity and ability of redeeming the honour of religion, so lamentably impair'd and forfeited by great pretenders to it. Let there be yet such a generation among us, of those that may abound in holiness, humility, charity, self-denial, undissembled zeal for thy glory, as by their exemplary, unblameable behaviour may adorn the gospel, and wipe off all those foul blots, which hath been cast upon their *profession*, by the malice and ignorance of those who devise faults or aggravate them, or condemn the generation of the *just* for the miscarriages of *professors*. Let not religion go down among

For the sake of religion.

mong us, in such a cloud, as their unsuitable behaviour hath brought upon it: but let such sincere lovers, and practicers of it, be raised up, and continued, as may effectually vindicate it, silence and shame its accusers; and make some reparations of the dishonour done to thy name, even by such as boast a zeal for the Lord of Hosts.

From their
wonted
prevalency

Isa. 18. 23

Suffer dust and ashes humbly to speak unto thee from the number of the truly Godly yet among us. Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked (*b*)? Notwithstanding the general corruption of our wayes, have we not multitudes that wickedly depart not from thee, but are stedfast in thy fear? In what nation hast thou a greater number, of holy, humble, sincere people, that go not after the service of their lusts, nor bow the knee to *Baal*, but daily to the father of mercies, in earnest supplications for thy favour, and are sincerely consecrated to thee? and shall not the voice of their prayers, prevail over the noise and provocations of our crying sins? And their fruitfulness prevent rooting up this thy garden, thy vineyard? Shall not they live before thee, who desire their lives for no other end, but to serve and please thee? Who are still contriving, which way they may most advance thy honour? We trust, there are many *Tens* in our city, many *Fifties* in our country, many *Thousands* in our Israel, and wilt thou not spare the place for *their sake* (*c*)? How ill can thy faithful industrious servants be spared

Isa. 18. 2

ed out of the world? O let not such judgments overflow us, as should sweep them away, and make them incapable of doing thee here any further service. 'Tis the living, the living shall praise thee; O let them live and they will bless thee. O let not the Sun go down at noon, nor the evening surprize thy labourers, while so much work is before them. Make it appear even to their malicious contemnners, how contrary thy judgment is theirs; how pretious they are in thy sight; and how themselves are beholden to them, while they undervalue and hate them; how much they contribute to the Kingdome's safety, while accountd the troublers of it. Thou hast said, at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a Kingdome, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from the evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them (*d.* And that, if I shut up heaven that their be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people: if my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked wayes; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land (*e.*). And thou hast been prevailed with for mercy and deliverance by a few, yea, a single person for the whole: why then, O our God, hast thou forsaken us? Why art thou so far from helping us, and from the words of our roaring? We cry in the day time, but thou

f Ps. 22. 1
&c.

g Ps. 80. 4.

h Ps. 10. 17

i Ch. 7. 15

k Ps. 80. 18

From our
own weak-
ness.

thou hearest not, and in the night season, and are not silent: but thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel: Our fathers trusted in thee and were not confounded; they cried unto thee and were delivered (f): And art thou not the same? And is not thine eye still upon the righteous, and thine ear open to their cry? Hast thou not as great an esteem, & art as willing to shew favour for them as ever? Sayest thou to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain? O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayers of thy people (g) wherewith thou wast wont to be delighted and conquered? Shall those made according to thy will be of no efficacy? Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear (h). O let us, to whom thou hast given no prohibition, but leave, and inclination to come unto thee, experience thee a God hearing prayers. O let thine eyes be open, and thine cares attend unto the prayers that are made in this land (i). O turn our prayers into praises for mercy; now we call upon thee in the day of trouble, deliver us that we may glorifie thee. So will we not go back from thee; quicken us, and we will call upon thy name (k).

We would plead with thee from *our own weakness*; and so that glory thou maist get to thy self in delivering and establishing us, which will appear to be the Lords doing and it will be marvellous in our eyes. It is a time for God to work, when men are utterly at a loss, and can only

only lament, not amend the sadness of their condition. When there is none else in Heaven or earth to help, thou art wont to lift up thy self, & to bring salvation by thy own outstretched arm (1). Thou art not willing to share thy glory with another; or to contribute any thing to men's idolizing their own strength, riches, multitudes: Thou chusest to perform thy mighty works, when least danger of ascribing them to any but thy self. We find thee complaining of *too many* (m), but never of *too few*, lest they vaunt themselves against thee, saying, their own hand hath saved them. Our extremity, is thy opportunity; when thy people are ready to be overwhelmed (n); when thou seest their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left (o), when they say our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our part (p); now will I arise saith the Lord: thou wilt be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble (q). O how often art thou seen in the *mount*, between the knife and the throat, the hand lifted up, and the blow (r)? Permitt-

ing thy people to be reduced to such straits, as to their plainest sense, omnipotency can only rescue them; for discovery of thy own readiness and ability to save, and to exercise and engage their faith, patience, love, thankfulness, and confidence for the future. And from such signal evidences of Divine assistance, most sensibly we make our acknowledgments, that if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallow-

ed

1 If. 33. 9.
10.

m Ju. 7. 2.

n Mar. 4.

37.

o Deu. 32.

39.

p Ez. 37. 11.

q Ps. 9. 9.

r Ge. 12. 10.

¹ *Phil. 2. 3.* ^{3.} ed us up quick (*s*). The many great disadvantages we lie under will tend to advance the praise, and discover the power of our unerring Physician, and mighty deliverer, who makes the most hopeless disease, the triumph of his art, and to whom no difficulties are insuperable. Why may we not then turn our very *discouragements* into *matter of confidence*; and make the grounds of our *fear*, *motives* to our *hope*, by using them as so many arguments in our petitioning for relief from Omnipotency. We are overrun with such fatal distempers, and so far from being able to heal our selves, that we can scarce discern which way it is possible; and had we not a God to rely on, should judge our selves quite past all hope of help or healing: O then that it might please the most High to undertake our establishment & cure when we seem to be cast off and given up for lost; how exceedingly will the dangerousness of the disease and untowardness of the patient, discover and commend the compassion and skill of our great Physician? How would all the difficulties, and seeming impossibilities in humbling, reforming, uniting such an *obstinate*, *wicked divided* people as we, contribute to the great praises of him that accomplishes it; who purposes and none can disappoint, works, and none can hinder him? We are poured out like water; all our bones are out of joint; our hearts are like wax, melted in the midst of our bowels, our strength is dried up, & thou hast brought us unto the dust of death; we lie open and obnoxious to the malice, subtilty, have

power and plots of our enemies, are ignorant of their conspiracies, & have little strength to resist. O our God, wilt thou not judge them; for we have no might of our own, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee (*t*). O ^{1 2 Chron. 20. 12.} be not thou far from us, for trouble is near, for there is none to help, O thou our strength, hast thou to help us (*v*). Attend unto our cry, for ^{2 Ps. 22. 11.} we are brought low; deliver us from our adversaries, for they are stronger than we. Bring our souls out of prison, that we may praise thy name (*w*). Save us according to thy mercy, that they ^{2 Ps. 142. 6.} may know that this is thy hand, that thou Lord ⁷ hast done it (*z*). And that all the Kingdoms ^{2 Ps. 109. 26 27.} of the earth may know, that thou art the Lord God, even thou only (*y*). 'Tis to thee the All- ^{2 King. 19. 19.} knowing & Almighty God we betake our selves; O make known thy wisdom and power, where the creatures is of so little use, in frustrating and defeating all preparations and devices against us. Help O Lord, or we perish: we are *impotent*, but thou art *Omnipotent*; our *insufficiency*, calls to thy *Allsufficiency*: If thou wilt, thou canst defend and deliver us: It is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power; against, or without means: with thee all things are possible; thou that shakest the powers of Heaven, canst shake the powers of the earth; thou that broughtest light out of darkness, and order out of confusion, canst create deliverance out of destruction it self. Thou that puttest a hook into the nostrils of the Leviathan, and a bridle upon the Sea, saying, hitherto shalt thou

go, and no further; canst restrain the rage of man, and bring back from the brink of ruine. Thou that found out a way to save a world canst also, to save this small remnant of it. Our counsels are confounded and our wits at an end; we see after all our consultations, we have taken the wisest way to ruine our selves: Lord we appeal from the wisdom of man to thine; we beg thy counsel which never fails; thou canst not be overreached by counsel, undermin'd with treason, nor surprized by stratagem; but canst take the wise in their own craftiness, and counterplot the policies of all the Sages of the earth. We know not how to get out of this Labyrinth, but all our intricacies are to thee an open path: teach then our Senators wisdom, find thou out a way to save us, and we shall then be wise and saved: be present with, and president among and over them, let nothing that concernes our peace be hid from their eyes. But if thou wilt not save us by others, save us by thy self: let thy wisdom alone work out our deliverance; leading us in the open plaines of safety, by what wayes seem best to thee: Then will we admire thy wisdom, & out O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom & knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out. (2).

2 Ro. 11.

33.

From his
own bow-
els & good
pleasure.

'Tis of the Lord's mercy that we are not consumed, and because his compassions fail not. If thou shouldest lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, make us as miserable as we have made our selves sinfull, and give us over to all those desolations the present
circum

circumstances of things (especially the continuance of our heinous crimes) threaten us with; thou might make thy arrowes drunk with our blood, thy anger and jealousie to smoake against us, and lay upon us all the curses that are writ in thy book, and blot out our name from under heaven. But we have heard the King of Israel is a merciful King: cruelty lodges not in thy bosome; thou delights not to bath thy sword in the blood of thy subjects; thou art not pleased in acting tragedies in the world, nor in the torture and ruine of thy poor creatures. The Lord will not cast off for ever, but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men (a). O we appeal to the tender bowels of our God; since mercy is thy name in which thou gloryest, let it be the work in which thou rejoycest; and now we beseech thee, let the power of our Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying, the Lord is long suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. Pardon we beseech thee the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven them even until now (b). We deserve no mercy, but mercy is shew'd for mercy sake; and thou hast mercy, because thou wilt have mercy, and thy mercy is over all thy works. Is not our God a God of bowels? That hath a sense of the miseries of his people, a great and ready compassion for them? And will he then be hardened against

a La. 3. 35;

32.

b Nu 14.

17. 26.

his poor people? Will it consist with his fatherly bowels, to behold us plunged into such doleful straits and perplexities? Will the Lord cast off for ever? Will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Do his promises fail for ever more? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies (e)? Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards us? Are they restrained? (d) Remember, O Lord thy tender mercies, and thy loving kindneses; for they have been ever of old (e). O! pity the desolations, and compassionate the ruins of poor *England*, that hath been the garden of the world; the beauty of Christendom; the defence of many nations, and terror of all; is become despicable as the dust, and trampled on by those, who have owned her very shadow for a sufficient shelter: let thy bowels yearn over her to see her in the dust. Return O Lord, deliver our souls, O save us for thy mercy sake (f). Disappoint our feares and dismall apprehensions: O spare thy people, whom thou hast created after thy own image, and redeemed with thy most precious blood, and let not thine heritage be brought to confusion. Nor desire we mercy; only in reference to outward safety, but inward sanctity: we would be saved from sin, as well as from misery; and made holy, as well as happy. Now herein will the glory of thy mercy appear, if thou save our bodies, our estates, our friends, so as withall, to

e Ps. 77. 7.

3

d Ps. 63. 15.

16.

e Ps. 25. 9.

f Ps. 6. 4.

save our soules : hereby will mercy be found in the embraces of justice, and so, both joyntly bearing up the diadem of thy glory : justice advanced in the full satisfaction taken from our surety; and mercy exalted, in converting us to him, and saving us by him. Now, if only thy justice be glorified in our destruction, rather glorifie thy mercy joyntly with it, in our salvation : If mercy must not rejoyce over justice, yet at least let mercy rejoyce together with it : if both can be glorious in England's preservation, let not only one be glorious in England's perdition.

When we have said all, we acknowledge we have nothing to say for our selves, & that nothing we can say, can in the least prove us deserving the mercy we need and sue for ; we therefore the more earnestly recommend our selves to thy free grace, and the more singly depend upon thy goodness, which will be the more manifested and magnified, the less we have to plead on our own behalf, the greater will thy compassions appear, who yet affords us gracious audience : Since then, our chief, indeed our only, discouragement is our wickedness and unworthiness, our abuse of mercies and unfruitfulness under them, our continued senselesness & hainous miscarriages under thy judgments, we thus far plead even our indefert itself, as it will contribute the more to the glory of that grace, which shall hear and help such worthless sinners as we. For thy name sake, O Lord, pardon our iniquities, for they are great. If it be an exaltation of mer-

^cy, to shew it self in misery, much more to magnifie it against sin, that calls for wrath, but misery naturally for mercy; when so marvailously display'd, as when thou sayest to people that
^g Ez. 16. 6. are in their blood, and pollution live (*g*)? O give us to possess this land, not for our righteousness, for we are a stiffnecked people, but for the wickedness of those that would drive us out; and for thy glory sake, for vindication of thy honour, which is otherwise subject to be trampled on. O work for thy name, that it should not be polluted before those among whom we were, in whose sight thou made thy self known unto us, in bringing us out of worse than *Egyptian* darkness (*b*). And what shall we say, when we turn our backs before our enemy? and what wilt thou do unto thy great name? Thou hast seemed to be at a strait between thine anger and thine honour (*i*); do it not for our sake, be we ashamed and confounded for our own wayes (*k*), but for thy own sake, for thy free mercy's sake (which hath prevailed with thee for all the great and good things thou hast done for the sons of men) without any other argument than what thou fetchest from thy own bowels. Remember thy word unto thy servants upon which thou hast caused us to hope (*l*). For my names sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it, for how should my name be polluted, and I will
^m Is. 48. 5. not give my glory unto another (*m*). Who is a God like thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth

^b Ez. 20.
 8. 9. 14. 22.

ⁱ De. 32.
 26. 27.
^k Ez. 36.
 22. 32.

^l Ps. 119.
 42.

^m Is. 48. 5.
 11.

passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his
 heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever
 because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn a-
 gain, he will subdue our iniquities: and thou
 wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea.
 Thou wilt perform the *truth* to *Jacob*, and the
mercy to *Abraham*, which thou hast sworn unto
 our fathers from the dayes of old (*n*). O Lord,
 to us belongs confusion of face, to our Kings, to n Mich. 7.
 our Princes, and to our fathers, because we have 18. &c.
 sinned against thee, thou art righteous in all
 the evil thou hast brought upon us; but to the
 Lord our God belongs mercy and forgiveness,
 though we have rebelled against him, O Lord,
 according to all thy righteousness, we beseech
 thee let thine anger and thy fury be turned a-
 way from us, because for our sins, and for the
 iniquities of our fathers, we are become a re-
 proach to all that are about us. Now therefore,
 O our God, hear the prayers of thy servants, &
 cause thy face to shine upon us, for the Lord's sake.
 O our God, encline thine ear and hear, open thine
 eyes and behold our desolations, and the people
 that are called by thy name; for we do not pre-
 sent our supplications before thee for our righte-
 ousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord hear,
 O Lord forgive; O Lord hearken and do, defer
 not for thy own sake, O our God, for thy
 City and thy people are called by thy name (*o*). o Da. 9. 3.
 Thou hast done great things for those, who have
 deserved exceeding ill (*p*), and made many gra-
 cious promises, notwithstanding their manyfold p Ezr. 5. &
 transgressions; and not waited for their repen- 9.
 tance 16. 57. 16.
&c.

7 Ezr. 20.
 23. 24. &
 26.
 22. &c.
 1 Pl. 136.

2 Ro. 15. 4.

1 Ezr. 36.
 Ho. 4. 5.

1 Ep. 2. 45.

ance before thou conferred the intended benefits; but by preventing them with these, hast drawn them unto it, that then (when thou hast dispensed on them those temporal and spiritual blessings) they should remember their own evil waies, and their doings which have not been good, and loath themselves in their own sight, for their iniquities, and for their abominations (9). Whence didst thou all those great acts for thy people (and first began even our reformation) but from thy mercy which endureth for ever (10)? What if *England* be not *Israel*, the *God of England*, is the *God of Israel*, unchangeable, and hath shewn in his word, promises, precepts, examples, what he will do to his Church, in all ages; and whatsoever things were written aforetime, concerning his dealings with his people were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (11). Hast thou not shewn mercy to a vile wretched people? O see the same free love on work, on our behalf; seeing it is in thy power to reform us by mercies as well as corrections, and hast declared thou wilt proceed this way in Gospel times (12). When didst thou, who art rich in mercy, for thy great love wherewith thou loved us, call the Gentiles to be thy Church, but when we were the wild olive, dogs, sinners, dead in trespasses & sins? by grace we are saved (13); & upon the same argument wilt thou call the *Jews* who have polluted thy name in every place. After thy various methods, they rebelled against thee, yet being full of compassion, thou forgave their iniquities

iniquities, & destroyed them not(*w*). And though
 thou art not under any obligation to do thus for
 this or that particular people, yet neither art
 thou restrained, and therefore we are not out of
 all hope, but that it may please thee to take this
 method with *us*, who may justly expect to be swal-
 lowed up in utter destruction, in that hitherto we
 are so obstinate, unreclaimed, unaffected with
 all thy dealings: yet it is in thy *power*, it may be
 thy *pleasure* to work upon, and reform us, by thy
 signal restoration of mercy to us, when we have
 no merit to challenge, and less reason to expect
 it. O since it is the glory of thy Sovereignty
 and Prerogative Royal, to pardon offences, let
 ours be pardoned, let the *sin* of *England* be
 blotted out, that the *name* of *England* be not
 blotted out. Our sins undermine our safety, that
 we may be saved, let thy Sovereignty tri-
 umph over them. Our sins are great, but
 greater is he that pardons. 'Tis the glory of a
 man to pass by an offence, much more thine,
 whose prerogative principally it concerns(*x*), and
 art unbounded in acts of grace. Lord glorifie ^{Ex. 34.}
 thy *Prerogative*; shew thy self to be *God*, by for-
 giving our great offences, and to be above Sove-
 reign and Subject, by forgiving both. Let it ap-
 pear that thou art *God*, and there is none like un-
 to thee, by pardoning those sins and remitting
 those punishments, that none else can. We are in-
 gulphed in misery, because we are de'uged in sin;
 all our misfortunes proceed from misdemeanors;
 take away our guilt, and our griefs will follow:
 let *England* be pardoned, and then we doubt not
 but

but it will be preserved. And do not only forgive, but reform us; let all that have received power, & authority from thee, improve it for his interest to whom all power in Heaven and earth is given. Awaken our Magistrates to greater vigilancy in searching out, suppressing, punishing impiety: against licentiousness of Judgment and practice; let *holiness* have, not only a *toleration*, but an *authority* among us, make our Officers peace, and our Exactors righteousness, that we may be an eternal excellency, and the joy of many generations (y). Let us search and try our waies, and turn unto thee our God; as universally and industriously combine to propitiate, as we have to provoke thee. Make us a Holy people zealous of good works. Let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish thou the just. Give thy people one heart and one way. Let every one that names the name of the Lord live as becomes the Gospel, depart from all iniquity; weep day and night, and give thee no rest untill thou have mercy on us. Thou that turnest the rock into a standing water and the flint into a fountain of water (z), strike upon *these* that are before thee. O Father of mercies, pity us who know not how to pity our selves. Though we have cast of all bowels, let us find *them* all concentrated in thy self; heal our wounds, and which of all others is the most desperate, our *unwillingness to be healed*: let the spirit of peace overshadow us; and impress on us the dove-like qualities of meekness and gentleness. Rescue our religion from our prophanation

y II. 60. 75.

z Ps. 114. 8.

phanation; not by taking it from us, but by conforming us to it. Do for us not only above what we can ask or think, but beyond what we would wish or chuse; and suffer us not to acquire the miseries we so eagerly pursue. Let us be happy in that relation, of having the Lord for our God: save thy people, bless thine inheritance; feed them also, and lift them up for ever (a). O *Ps. 139.* canst thou see thy *Sion* a shipwracking, and not lend thy hand? Can the Shepherd be content to see the wolves worry his tender flock? The Father love to behold his children hate one another? Dearest Lord is not thy *glory* dearer to thee, than to thy spouse? Shall she be solicitous, and wilt not thou seem so to provide against thy dishonour? Is the Crown of Christ glistering enough on his head in the eyes of all the world? Hath our Jesus the full procurement of his blood? Hast thou left thy compassions, as well as the infirmities of thy body behind thee on earth? Is *our Joseph* in Heaven where there is provision enough, and shall thy brethren starve for want of crumbs of comfort from thy table? Are thine affections altered with thy condition? Dost thou in thy glory trample under foot thy children, whom thou accounted as the apple of thine eye in the daies of thy sufferings? Shall we give over praying for opening the blind eye, and softening the hard heart? Shall we fall asleep and urge thee no more? Shall we pull our hands from thy plough, and our necks from thy yoke? Will the Lord dispense with our lukewarmness, and wink at our apostacy? Is it not thy

b Il. 2. 2.
Mich. 4. 1.

thy burthen to see thy spirit so grieved? To see such noisome weeds and errors to grow in thy garden, which thou so much regardest? And so much backsliding after so much profession of reformation? Hath not the Lord said *his mountain* shall be established in the top of *all the mountains* (*b*)? And that *Jerusalem* shall be made the joy of many generations? Is not this thy own hand and seal? How long stay thy Chariot wheels? Is the Lord angry at the prayers of his people, and not at the blasphemies of his enemies? Art thou offended because we *pray* for *Sion*, and wilt thou not if we forbear? Have we already the first fruits and shall we never have the harvest? Will the Lord comfort us mourning, enliven us dying, or raise us when buried and in our graves? O Lord, though thou dishonourest thy people, yet wilt thou disgrace the Throne of thy glory? Will not the adversary say, surely if God in love had thus begun to build, he would have gone on to finish? Though we are trampled under foot, must thy Christ also? If his body hath deserved to sit on dunghills, & lie in fetters of Iron, our head hath merited to sit on a Throne, & to have the liberty of his spirit in the world. Though our prayers are rejected, yet wilt thou not fulfil thine own promise? Thou hast a Prerogative to save and destroy, but art thou not bound in Covenant to set up thy Son? And if thou make not hast for his glory, will not the world be ready to say the Lord is gone back of his word? Is it only free grace and mercy, and not also justice and righteousness for our
God

God to justify condemned sinners, & to sanctifie prophane conversations, & to carry on the building of the new Jerusalem to its desired perfection. Doth the Lord seem to cast us off, to see whether we will indeed cast him off? Or hide himself, to see if we will earnestly seek after him? Because his smiles have not caused us to love him, will he now frown on us, to make us to fear him? Are the golden daies of his spiritual presence gone, and not to come, as we hoped they were? That we should rather put mourning on our backs, than take harps in our hands? Because England hath been perfidious and perjurious to God, will God now break his covenant of faithfulness with England? Shall the unfaithfulness of man, make God unfaithful? Did the Lord of old wait to be gracious, and will he now wait till we are gracious? Was the Lord wont to be found of those that sought him not, and will he not be now found of those that seek him? Wilt thou not pardon our hypocrisy, pride, passions, and prophaneſs till we *repent*, and is not *that*, thy gift? Shall disconsolate *Sion* never be ransomed from her spiritual slaveries, and distractions, till worthy? Is not the price of her redemption already paid? and will the Lord seem to require the debt again? Lord, are we so far gone from thine house, like prodigals, that either we want an heart to return or an hope, if we return, that our father will accept of us? Art not thou the God of peace? Is not thy son, the son of peace? Thy spirit, the spirit of peace? Thy Gospel, the gospel of peace? And shall not thy children, be children of peace?

Is Christ in one of his followers, against Christ in another? Is Christ divided? Blessed father, how shall the world know we are *thy children*, if we have not thy *Image*? Thy *servants*, if we wear not thy *Livery*? Will the world be convinced by our *divisions*, that *thou art love*? Thy people see not so much prophaneſs in the world, as the world ſees paſſions among thy people. We censure and condemn them for not agreeing with thy people, whileſt they ſee thy people agree not amongst themſelves. Ah Lord! if *charity* be the onely badge of *thy diſciples*, how ſhalt thou in the world? Is this a time to pull down, and not at all to build up? To caſt away ſtones and to divide, and not to gather ſtones to raiſe thy temple? Art thou reſolv'd no more ſtories ſhall be built in *Sion*, till one ſtone be not left on another in *Babylon*? Are the grounds of our feares, not only from thy ſecret or open enemies, but alſo from the vain converſations of the profeſſours of thy name? Will the Lord conſume their gold & ſilver, as well as the other's hay & ſtubble? O how hath one form of thy people been trampling & triumphing over another? O how many *Sins* dowe make, that thou haſt not? How many *articles* do our *paſſions* put into our *Creed*, which thou never enjoyn'd to be believ'd for ſalvation? How have we been tiſhing mint, aniſe, & cummin, neglecting the ſalvation of ſoules, & weighty matters of the Lord? O, when will the candle of the Almighty, ſhine on the heads of thy people as of old? When ſhall the name of thy ſon be poured out as a precious Ointment, that the virgins again may love thee? Lord,
let

let us be thy patients though thou woundest us: under thy rod, rather then we should be out of thy covenant; rather then we should sleep to death, sound thy trumpet, beat thine alarm; rather then we should not have thy presence, let us go into a furnace; thy Son, let us have a storm; rather then we should not be thy Children, whip us; thy servants, beat us; thy spouse, chide us; thy friends, frown on us. O sound a retreat to our disorders; let all thy Saints engage their prayers and endeavours against the common enemy; that *Sion* may be terrible as an army with banners; that the brats of *Babylon* may come and worship before her feet, and know that thou hast loved her. If the building of *Sion* may not go forward in this age, Lord, let it not go backward; if we may not build thy spiritual temple, let us at least lay up stuff for the building it in the next generation. O, how sad is it, that those who have been brought up in scarlet, should embrace dunghills? And that *England* that was the *Terrour* of the Lord, to the nations round about us, should so much be a scorn unto them, and a terror one to another? O make up our breaches, compose our differences, heal our disorders, unite our hearts to thee and one another: Restore, continue our forfeited mercies, prevent and remove our deserved judgments, be no more a consuming fire among us, but a wall of fire round about us to secure us and destroy our enemies; delight to bless us, and to watch over us, and to do us good: let us begin the reparation of our ruines, in the reformation of all our lives. Sanctifie the various dispensations of thy providence towards us. Turn us unto thee by a speedy and an unfeigned repentance. O let the power of thy arm who art the Lord of Host, and the power of thy spirit, who art the God of all grace, now appear

appear and be exercised for and upon us: let thy power deliver us from the dangers wherewith we are surrounded; and thy grace so sanctifie this deliverance, that it may work those blessed effects among us, which no former dispensations have done, even to *bumble and reform* us. Let thy mercies overcome the desert and cry of our hainous sins, and be now manifested towards us for thine own name sake; and let the manifestation of these undeserved mercies, overcome our stubborn hearts; that we may be ashamed, and loath our selves when we remember our own evil wayes; that ever we should be so basely disingenuous to rebel against a God of such patience and compassion, who notwithstanding all our unworthiness and provocations of his glorious majesty, yet in our low estate, hath pityed, and seasonably relieved us. Wherefore, *give glory to thy own name*, O God, we beseech thee, *give glory to thy own name*, in redeeming Israel, England, out of all its troubles, and from its iniquities; that hereby we may be not only engaged, but enabled to serve and glorifie thee, as thy redeemed ones for ever.

F I N I S.
